Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

TRANSFORMATION OF SIKHISM

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org



Sir Gokul Chand Narang.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

TRANSFORMATION OF SIKHISM

BY

SIR GOKUL CHAND NARANG

Kt., M.A., Ph.D., M.L.A., Barrister-at-Law,

Ex-Minister for Local Self-Government, Punjab.

FOREWORD BY

SIR JOGENDRA SINGH, KT.,

Education Member, Viceroy's Executive Council.

Second Edition

REVISED AND ENLARGED

NEW BOOK SOCIETY

PUBLISHERS, POST BOX 47, LAHORE

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org



The Hon'ble Sir Jogendra Singh, Kt.,
Member, Viceroy's Executive Council.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Foreword

(BY THE HON'BLE SIR JOGENDRA SINGH)

> The shell of credulity is shattered
> The heart is illuminated with light
> The fetters have fallen from the feet
> The Guru has freed the bond (slaves).

This is the miracle which Guru Nanak and his nine successors performed. In a wonderful way the voice of Guru Nanak speaks without any variation through all the Sikh Gurus :—

> Of the unity of the God, of single hearted devotion to Him as the only means of salvation, and of gentle, gracious, fearless and clear-headed living.

The Gurus held that where love was, there was freedom, in hearts in which love dwelt, forgiveness reigned. Devotion to God was test of all actions. They who were devoted to God were free from sin, and those who followed the dictates of their own minds could not escape its snares.

In India God was represented in multifarious forms; there was the "absolute" for the philosopher, and numberless God and Goddesses for the ignorant. Learned men spoke

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

of God in more senses than one and rendered faith invalid and faltering. By the lack of central certainties, men were unable to believe with the fullness of their hearts and suffered frustration of inner life. "God, the omnipresent," the Gurus said "is supreme. If man's mind is confused about Him, man's whole life is confused."

It was from this prevalent confusion that the Gurus redeemed their followers. The Gurus by giving the true word transmuted the universe and all its life from matter into spirit, from death and pain into life and love. They who followed the Gurus were rescued from doubt, frustration and fear; the poison of possessiveness tormented their minds no more. The loss of self interest was rewarded by the serenity of mind. He who conquers the mind conquers the world, the Guru declared.

Prophets come as messengers of God with direct knowledge. That is why their word endures and of others who argue from known to the unknown perishes. The Guru said: I only utter "the word of God as it comes to me."

People groping in darkness, suddenly found light and gathered round the Gurus as thirsty travellers gather round a flowing fountain. "God is one and all mankind is His," he told them. The Gurus said "torments of flesh cannot crush the impulse of

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

passion. The law of sacrifice and love is more constantly at work in a household than in the cloistered caves of ascetics."

Hindus and Muslims sought them and found in their teaching the balm which their sick souls needed. The Gurus told them that desire which flamed into passion, anger which banished good sense, attachment which transmitted pleasure and pain through links that it established, and conceit were evils which darkened the mirror of the mind. It was in overcoming these that mists disappeared and light of truth shone again. They ridiculed in words dipped in honey, the many outer practices and performances that had taken the place of real religion and relieved their followers of the trammels of caste and creed. Listen and learn the way of real happiness, says the Guru.

Those who are eager to know can hear the Gurus speak through Guru Granth Sahib, the voice that has brought to the children of men, joy, comfort and devotion. I am sure Sir Gokul Chand Narang, if he for a moment descended from the pedestal of higher criticism, would find the voice of truth in every word of Guru Granth Sahib and would admit that reverence shown by the Sikhs to the word of the Gurus is the purest form of expressing devotion.

The Gurus gave their followers a central place of worship, in Gurmukhi their own

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

script, in Langer a mingling of all classes, in dining together realisation of the truth" that all food is gift of God and that prejudices about it are entirely invalid." Finally, Guru Govind Singh Sahib in his wisdom pro-claimed :—

Accept the Guru Granth
As the visible image of the Guru
They whose heart is pure
Can find the truth in the *Shabad*.

The transformation, in truth which Sir Gokul Chand Narang speaks of, was not that of the Sikhs but of others irrespective of caste or creed who abandoned the worship of sonor-ous generalities and found in the teaching of the Gurus the truth that their souls sought and who became Sikhs. The Guru said :

O, thou stranger Jiva, why art thou entangled in tangles

The true Master dwells in thee, why art thou enmeshed in the net of death.

The Gurus and their followers suffered martyrdom to show the way to end all tyran-nies. Guru Hargovind wielded two swords, of spiritual and temporal sovereignty, and fought the Imperial armies with success. The young Guru Govind Singh told his father, when he wrote to him from prison, that it

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

was given to Him to save his people by giving his own life. Guru Tegh Bahadur gave his life, and his successor Guru Govind Singh created the Khalsa. He baptised the Sikhs and gave them a common uniform and inspired every Sikh with an unconquerable spirit.

Guru Govind Singh reaffirmed the unity of God and brotherhood of man. He said, temple and the mosque were the same, Nimaz, the Muslim prayer, and Hindu worship served the same purpose, and men differed in relation to their environment and upbringing. Such was the confidence he inspired that while he fought with the Imperial armies, it were his Muslim friends who rushed to his rescue. Guru Govind Singh when he lost his four sons exclaimed :—

I have sacrificed my four sons for the protection of my thousands of sons, what matters if four are gone. May these thousands live.

He held in abhorrence the priests and priest craft, who used their power to hamper the natural life and soul of men and for the kind of religion they taught, which bred new hates instead of concord. He held that the spirit of love is the life in religion, and when love was replaced by fear it gave birth to superstition, which had its roots in ignorance of God. He proclaimed, self love makes life a hell, it engenders jealousy, fear and hate. It cries out, "I must have all to myself." The real love, which is giving, opens the gates of

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

paradise and makes earthly life a heaven. To love God is to lose all sense of self. Sikhs who lived for God became fearless, selfless and united.

Sir Gokul Chand Narang speaking of the future of the Sikhs has his eye on the political scene, on population figures and on present limitations of the constitution. It is true that some Sikh leaders have at present their eyes glued on political shop windows, endeavouring to secure the best bargains at the Centre and in the Provinces. Some of them are following false clues, but the word of Guru remains, and the future of the Sikhs does not depend on external but on eternal verities. It depends on their power to live as the Gurus have enjoined them to live, to take the gospel of the Guru to all parts of India and abroad, to encourage the Sahaj dharis and to fling open the gates of the Guru to all.

My esteemed friend, Sir Gokul Chand Narang, has portrayed how spiritual emancipation and right lead raised the Khalsa into a nation. But under divided loyalties, he is not certain, whether the transformation to which he has borne so eloquent a witness, is to be helped or to be hindered by the Hindus. The choice remains with the Hindus, what would they ha nur se their weaknesses or rise to power and reap its fruit of independence which they so ardently desire. Even Sir Gokul Chand who has seen the light on

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the path and the way to freedom, and how true religion can raise even down-trodden people, cannot tell them to leave the old familiar caves and ascend the heights under the banner of the Gurus. My wonder is that Sir Gokul Chand who has witnessed the building of a nation, who would love to see India become great has not himself become the apostle of Sikhism and followed the road which would lead India to the pinnacle of power. To him and others of his way of thinking, I would say in the words of the Guru :—

Meditate on the deeds of those who
recite the name
Share their earnings with others and
utter *Waheguru.*
Meditate on the deeds of those who
wield the sword and defend the
defenceless
Meditate on the virtues of those who
overlook the faults of their brethern
are lowly in spirit.
exalted in intelligence
and make their intelligence the instrument of divine will.
This is the prayer that goes forth from
all Sikh congregations.
May the word of Guru Nanak
Be ever in the ascendent
And in its ascendency
May the whole world have prosperity
and peace.

Jogendra Singh.

Aira Holme, Simla. E.
6th August, 1945.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

In sending forth this little treatise on Sikhism the author has aimed at presenting to the general reader a concise but complete view of the various processes which led to the transformation of Sikhism from a religious sect into a political organisation. The book neither pretends to be a chronicle of the Sikhs nor a dissertation on Sikhism itself. It is simply a brief narrative of the various stages through which the Sikhs passed and the vicissitudes which they underwent before they became the sovereign power in the Punjab. The author has dealt with the subject neither in the spirit of a hostile critic nor as votary of Sikhism, though he has been, since his infancy, a devoted admirer of the Gurus, and has made Sikhism his life long study. He has tried to put before the general public in an impartial manner the results of his long and careful study of the early history of the Sikhs.[1] How far he has succeeded in his task is for the public to judge. The very nature of the subject puts limitations on

---

1. The writer studied every important book or MS. dealing with Sikh history that he could find in the Bodleian library at Oxford and the libraries of the India office, British Museum and the Royal Asiatic Society in London. The Bibliography gives a list of the important works.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

originality, but the author ventures to hope that he has succeeded to a certain extent in presenting an original treatment of the material before him, and that when the reader has gone through the following pages he will have a pretty clear and correct idea of the forces which wrought such a momentous change in the constitution of Sikhism. The author has not tried to contradict or preach, nor to excite and inflame but simply to instruct and explain.

The process of transformation was completed by 1768 A.D. when the Sikhs occupied Lahore, and the narrative might as well have been left there, but as the author intends to begin his second volume on Sikh history with the rise of Ranjit Singh, he has thought it advisable to fill up the gap between the Sikh occupation of Lahore and Ranjit Singh's accession by giving a brief account of the Misals which ruled simultaneously in the various parts of the Punjab during that period.

Three appendices have been added to give the general reader an idea of the contents of Sikh scriptures and of the nature of Sikhism as a religious and social system.

GOKUL CHAND NARANG.

Feb. 9, 1912.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The first edition of this book was published about thirty three years ago. It received a very encouraging and generous reception at the hands of the Press as well as Professors and students of history. It has been for many years a recommended text book for the M.A. course in history in the Calcutta, Punjab and probably in some other Universities of India. In the preface to the first edition, the writer had expressed an intention to write a second volume on Sikh history beginning with the rise of Maharaja Ranjit Singh but he very much regrets that owing to other engagements he has not been able to carry out his intention. He has, however, tried to complete his miniature picture of Sikh history by adding a short life sketch of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the developments that took place after the great Maharaja's demise, including a brief account of the later and more recent activities of the Sikh community.

It is expected that the book, as it now appears, will give a fairly complete insight into the prominent features of Sikh character and Sikh history to the general reader as well as to those who may have to study it for University examinations. This being the object in view, it would have been sheer pedantry on the writer's part to encumber and obscure the main features of the narrative by digging

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

into the long forgotten and unnecessary details of Moghul and even Sikh history which can well be left to those who may undertake a specialised course of research.

The author appreciates the personal references made to him in the foreword by his old colleague and esteemed friend, the Hon'ble Sardar Sir Jogendra Singh. Surely the Sardar realizes that a rational review avoiding fulsome adulation may be as sincere and as valuable as an enthusiast's pæans of praise. Even one who has had the good fortune of being in touch with the original sources, cannot but reverently appreciate the beauty and grace with which the Gurus conveyed the ancient teachings to Hindu masses to whom in those dark days access to the original sources had become impossible. The Hindus of the Punjab can never forget their obligation to Guru Nanak and his successors, imbued with the same spirit, for the spiritual succour they received at their hands in their hour of greatest need. As Tulsi's Ramayana in the United Provinces so the Granth Sahib in the Punjab saved the Hindus from spiritual starvation and prevented them from crossing over the religious bourne from which no return was possible.

Sir Jogindra Singh has referred to what he considers the author's "divided loyalties." No such question can arise so far as the author's role as a writer of history is concerned. As historian his first loyalty is to truth. He cannot play the part of an apostle

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

either to one community or the other, nor suggest or insinuate any measures to promote or hinder any particular movement. The author, however, fully appreciates the compliment implied in Sir Jogendra Singh's tacit desire and expectation regarding him. Though far from being an apostle he has always been a humble missionary of Hindu-Sikh unity. As regards the Hindus in general it is a patent fact that inspite of the vagaries of certain fanatical and irresponsible persons the Hindus as a body have always stood by the Sikhs. As in the past so in the recent operations the contribution of the Hindus to Sikh achievements has not been negligible. Their future relations will depend upon the wisdom and foresight shown by the leaders of both communities and their proper grasp of the coming events.

One word more and that is with respect to the misprints which the reader will find in various places in this book. The proof sheets were never sent to the author and the responsibility for the errors rests entirely with the publishers. They have attached to the book a Corrigendum to enable the reader to make necessary corrections.

GOKUL CHAND NARANG.

Mussoorie,
22nd August, 1945.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Bibliography

The following books and manuscripts were consulted and quoted from in the preparation of this work.

1. Adi Granth (Gurmukhi) by Arjun. (1590 A. D. About.) See Appendix 1.

2. Janam Sakhi of Nanak (Gurmukhi) By unknown. (1590 A. D. About). A reprint of the India Office copy, used by Trumpp and declared to be the oldest, edited by Macauliffe 1886.

3. Varan (Gurmukhi) By Bhai Gurdas Bhalla (1600 A. D. About). The Bhai was a contemporary of the fifth Guru and acted as his amanuensis during the compilation of Adi Granth. The book, in very good poetry, consists of panegyrics on the Gurus, and of moral and religious discourses. (Mufid-i-Am Press, Lahore).

4. Tarikh-i-Farishta (Persian) By. Md. Qasim Farishta (1612 A. D. About.) Edited by John Briggs (Government College Press, Bombay, 1831).

5. Dabistan-i-Mazhib (Persian) By Muhsin Fani. (1645 A. D.) A contemporary and friend of Hargovind, the sixth Guru. I consulted Bombay edition of 1292 H.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

6. Raht Nama (English) By Prahlad Rai (1695 A. D.?) Translated into English by Sardar Atar Singh, Chief of Bahadur. (Albert Press, 1876).

7. Raht Nama (English) By Nand Lal (1695 A. D.?) Nand Lal was the maternal uncle of Govind Singh, the tenth Guru.

8. Vichitra Natak (Gurmukhi) By Guru Govind Singh (1705 A. D. About). See Appendix I.

9. Tarikh-i-Iradat Khan, MS. 1816, Rieu. Brit. Mus. (Persian) By Mirza Mubarak Allah Wazih alias Iradat Khan. (1712 A. D. About). The author was present at the siege of Lohgarh with the Emperor. Hijira date of the MS. 1126.

10 Early records of British India (English) By J. T. Wheeler. The book contains a letter dated March 10, 1716, sent by British Envoys from Delhi where they witnessed the execution of Banda and his 780 companions.

11. Guru Bilas (Gurmukhi) By Bhakt Singh (1718 A. D.) The author was a disciple of Mani Singh, the martyr, a contemporary of the tenth Guru.

12. Ibrat Nama (Persian) M. S. 1935, Rieu. and Tarikh-i-Farrukh Siyar M. S. 26, 245 Rieu. (Persian) By Md. Qasim (1719 A. D. About). The author, a servant of Arif Beg

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Khan, Naib Nazim of Lahore, witnessed the siege of Gurdaspore and capture of Banda. Hijira date of the M. S. 1134.

13. Muntakhib-ul-Bab (M. S. 6573-6575 Rieu). (Persian) By Mirza Hasham Khafi Khan. (1720 A. D. About). The M. S. in British Museum was obtained from the library of Nawab Samsam-al-Mulk Shah Nawaz Khan of Hyderabad, and is dated 1196 A. H.

14. Tarikh-i-Md. Shahi (M. S. 1826 Rieu) (Persian) By Khushal Chand. (1730 A. D. About) Contemporary of Banda, but his account of the Sikhs is very poor. The M. S. in British Museum came from the Alwar State Library.

15. Maasir-al-Umara (Persian) By Nawab Shah Nawaz Khan (1744-49 A. D.) Published by Asiatic Society of Calcutta (1888-1891).

16. Sair-al-Mutaakhkhirin (Persian) By Syed Ghulam Hussain Khan. (1780 A. D. About). The book was written under the patronage of Warren Hastings. Its account of the Sikhs reads like a copy of Khafi Khan. (Refer to Nawalkishore Press Ed.)

17. Travels of Tegh Bahadur (English) By Syed Ghulam Hussain Khan. (1780 A. D. About). Translated from Gurmuki by S. Atar Singh of Bhadaur (1876) original can't be earlier than 1780 A. D. Sack of Nowhar

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

(1754) mentioned and British territory referred to.

18. Risala-i-Nanak Shah (M. S. Bodln.) (Persian) By Budh Singh (1784 A. D.) Author was a servant of Major James Browne and wrote the book at his master's request. He is not very exact in his facts.

19. Var Hakikat Rai (Gurmukhi) By Aggra (1790 A. D.) Was probably an eye witness of the tragedy of Hakikat's execution.

20. A journey from Bengal to England; 2 Vols. (English). By George Forster. (1793 A. D.) Printed and published in London.

21. Memoirs of George Thomas (English) by William Francklin. (1803 A. D.) Published by subscription in Calcutta.

22. A sketch of the Sikhs (English) By Sir John Malcolm. (1805 A. D.) Malcolm based his book on Bakht Mal's Khalsa Nama. See Revised Edition, Amar Press, Benares.

23. History of Sikhs (M. S. Or. 187 Brit. Museum) (Persian) Anonymous. (1811 A. D.) Most probably by Buta Shah, the Peshkar of General Ochterloney at whose request he wrote the book. See Gyan Singh's Panth Prakash.

24. Tarikh-i-Maharaja Ranjit Singh (M. S. Royal Asiatic Society) (Persian) By Munshi Sohan Lal. (1831 A. D.) Sohan Lal

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

was Ranjit Singh's .Court historian. M. S. presented to Sir C. Wade in 1831. "As a record of dates and a chronicle of events tested by a minute comparison with other authorities and my own personal investigations into its accuracy during my 17 years residence among the Sikhs, I am able to pronounce it in those two respects as a true and faithful narrative of Ranjit Singh's eventful life." Wade's note on the flyleaf. It is a pity, however, that the same cannot be said about its narrative of early history of the Sikhs.

25. Origin of the Sikh Power (English) By H. T. Prinsep (1834 A. D.) First published in Calcutta. See Lahore Edition of 1897. The book is based upon the Reports of Wade and Murray. Murray based his Report on the diary of Khushwaqt Rai, the British Gazetteer in Amritsar.

26. Travels in Kashmir and Punjab (English) By Baron Charles Hugel. (1836 A. D.) See Translation by T. B. Jervis, F.R.S., London (1845).

27. Court and Camp of Ranjit Singh (English) By W. G. Osborne. (1840 A. D.) The author was Military Secretary to Auckland and visited the Punjab in 1838.

28. Sri Guru Suraj Prakash (Gurmukhi) By Santokh Singh (1843 A. D.) Recently printed at Lahore (under the patronage of Maharana Padma Chandra of Jhabbal) in 6

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

vols. covering more than 3,000 pages. Narrative brought down to 1747 A. D. when Sahib Devan the tenth Guru's wife died in Delhi.

29. The Panjab (English) By Steinbach (Lt. Col.) (1845 A. D.) Was 9 years in the Sikh service. Based upon Prinsep, Thornton, and Von Hugel. Early history very briefly touched upon. Second Ed. 1846.

30. History of the Sikhs (English) By W. L. M'gregor (1856 A. D.) Full of details but not very accurate.

31. History of the Sikhs (English) By J. D. Cunningham. (1848 A. D.) Best history of Sikhs by an Englishman. (References to second Ed. 1853).

32. Tarikh-i-Panjab (M. S. India Office No. 503 Ethe) (Persian) By Ghulam Mahi-ud-Din alias Buti Shah. (1848 A. D.) Probably an enlargement of British Museum M. S. Or. 187.

33. Tarikh-i-Panjab (Persian) By Abdul Karim (1850 A. D.) Almost wholly devoted to Anglo-Sikh Wars.

34. Thirty-five years in the East. (English) By J. M. Honighbergher. (1852 A. D.) Author was, for long, Court Physician at Lahore.

35. Ibrat Nama (M. S. India Office No. 504 Ethe) (Persian). By Ali-ud-Din.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

(1854 A. D.) Based upon Khair-ud-Din's book written during Ranjit Singh's reign as shown by internal evidence. See ff. 10 and 52.

36. Tarikh-i-Panjab (Hindustani) By Kanhhya Lal (1877 A. D.) From Nanak to Mutiny. Does not show much research.

37. Sri Guru Panth Prakash. By Gyan Singh Gyani. (1880 A. D.) Based upon numerous Gurmukhi works on Sikh Religion and history. See Shamshir-i-Khalsa (Hindustani) by the same author.

38. Gazetteer of Amritsar District (English) (1883-84 A. D.)

39. Sikhan de Raj di Vithya (English) By H. Court (1888 A. D.) Translation from Panjabi, text-book for English candidates in Panjabi.

40. History of the Panjab (English) By Syed Md. Latif (1891 A. D.) Best book on the subject by an Indian writer, from the earliest times to contemporary events.

41. Shahid Ganj (Hindustani) By Mulk Raj Bhalla. (1895 A. D.) The only book on Hindu Martyrology in Urdu.

42. The Sikhs and Sikh Wars (English) By Sir G. Gough and A. Innes. (1897 A. D.) Early History just touched upon. Account of wars detailed.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

43. Nanak Charitra (Hindustani) By Mulk Raj Bhalla (1904 A. D.) Best life of Nanak in Urdu, shows research and thought.

44. The Sikhs (English) By Sir J. J. H. Gordon (1904 A.D.) Neither deep nor detailed, but interesting.

45. Banda Bahadur. (Gurmukhi) (1907 A. D.) Published by the Historical Research Society of the Chief Khalsa Diwan, Amritsar. The only book in Gurmukhi written on scientific lines.

Besides the above mentioned historical works the following books have been laid under contribution :—

1.	Brahmanism and Hinduism ...	Monier Williams.
2.	Hinduism ...	Barnett.
3.	Religions of India ...	Barth.
4.	Religions of India ...	Hopkins.
5.	Auld Lang Syne ...	Max Muller.
6.	Hindu Castes and Sects. ...	J. N. Bhattacharya.
7.	Mystics, etc. of India	Oman.
8.	Mutual Influence of Muhammadans and Hindus ...	F. W. Thomas.
9.	The translation of the Adi Granth ...	Trumpp.
10.	Gurumat Prabhakar (Gurmukhi) ...	Kahn Singh.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

11. Ham Hindu Nahin (Gurmukhi) ... Khan Singh.

12. Bivah Samskar Bhag (Gurmukhi) ... Col. Jwala Singh, (Manager, Golden Temple, Amritsar.)

Before sending the second edition to the press, the author studied the following books on Sikh history and religion, published recently.

1. Sikhism ... Prof. Teja Singh.
2. Essays in Sikhism ... Prof. Teja Singh.
3. Psalm of Peace ... Prof. Teja Singh.
4. Philosophy of Sikhism Dr. Sher Singh.
5. Banda Singh Bahadur Prof. Ganda Singh.
6. Ten Masters .... Prof. Puran Singh.
7. Spirit Born People ... Prof. Puran Singh.
8. Message of Sikhism... Prof. Puran Singh.
9. Evolution of Khalsa... Bannerji.
10. Maharaja Ranjit Singh Griffin.
11. Jang Nama ... Qazi Nur Mohd.
12. Growth of responsibility in Sikhism ... Prof. Teja Singh
13. Miracle of Sikhism ... Sir Jogendra Singh
14. Sikh Ceremonies ... Sir Jogendra Singh

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CONTENTS

Chapter	*Subject*	*Page.*
I.	Spiritual emancipation	25
II.	Sikhs form a community	44
III.	Increasing influence of the Gurus	57
IV.	Foundation of Sikh theocracy	67
V.	Persecution drives the Sikhs to arms	78
VI.	Some notable executions	90
VII.	Armed resistance begins	103
VIII.	Peaceful organisation	114
IX.	Sikhism under Govind	123
X.	Govind creates a nation	135
XI.	Govind's wars, wanderings and death	150
XII.	Sikh conquests under Banda	171
XIII.	Temporary suppression of the Sikhs	200
XIV.	Sikhs reappear and become a power	208
XV.	Sikhs take Lahore and coin money	221
XVI.	Sikhs become a sovereign power	237

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Chapter	*Subject*	*Page.*
XVII.	The Punjab under the Misals	254
	(1) The Bhangi Misal	255
	(2) The Ahluwalia Misal	264
	(3) The Ramgarhia Misal	267
	(4) The Nakai Misal	270
	(5) The Kanhia Misal	272
	(6) The Dallewalia Misal	276
	(7) The Nishanwalia Misal	277
	(8) The Singhpuria Misal	278
	(9) The Karora Singhi Misal	280
	(10) The Shahid & Nihang Misal	282
	(11) The Phulkia Misal	282
	(12) The Sukarchakia Misal	289
XVIII.	The Punjab Administration under the Misals	294
XIX.	Maharaja Ranjit Singh	311
XX.	After him the deluge	322
XXI.	Later developments	332
XXII.	Recent developments	336
XXIII.	The Future of the Sikhs	348
Appendix		
I.	The Sikh Scriptures	357
II.	Is Sikhism a mixture ?	368
III.	Distinguishing Features of Sikhism	383

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

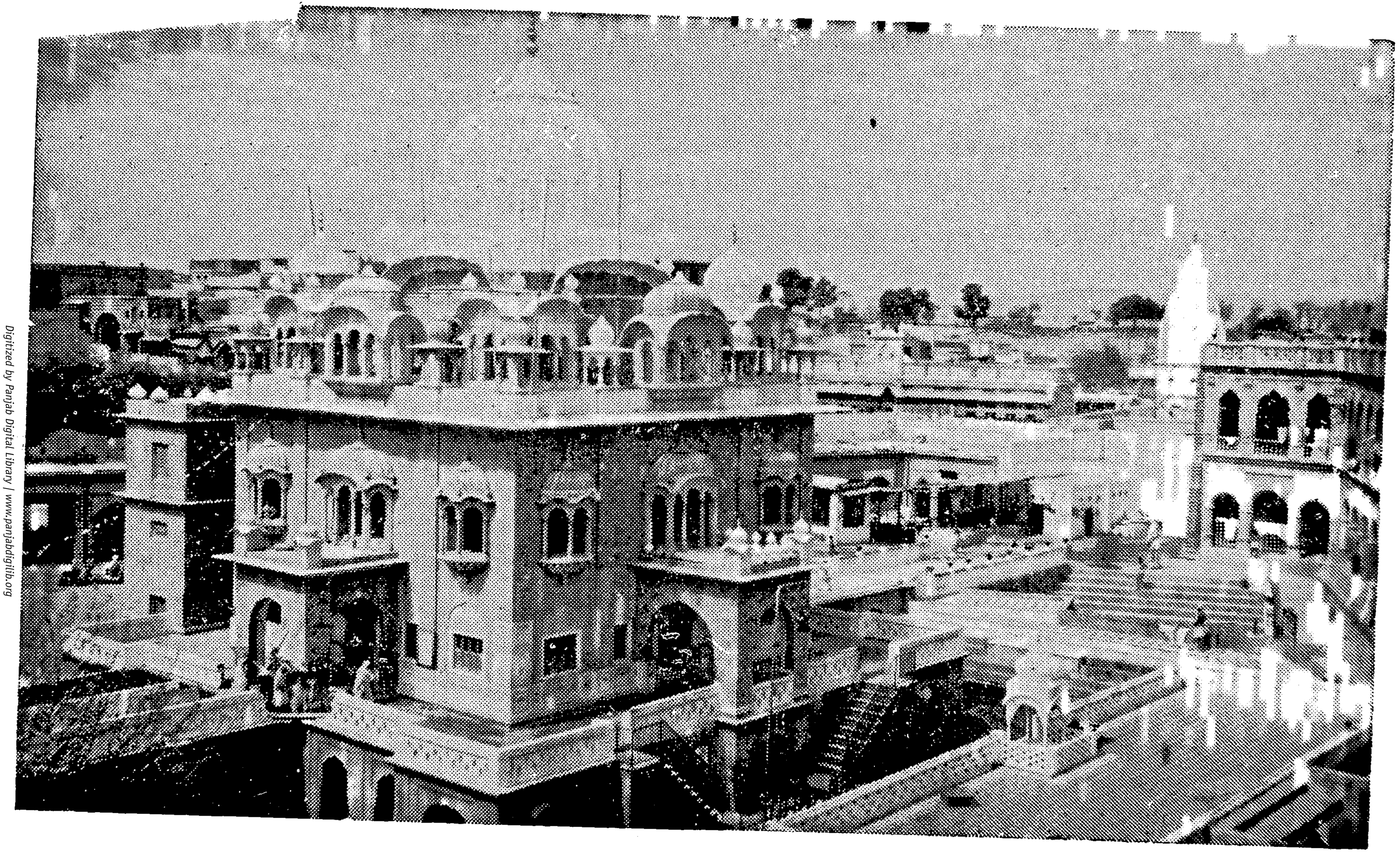
All Rights of Translation
& Reproduction reserved
by the
PUBLISHERS

First Edition —1912.

Second Edition —1945.

PUBLISHED BY
Mr. N.B. Sen, Managing Director, New Book Society, Lahore and printed at the Military & Commercial Press, Dil Mohd. Road, Lahore.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org



SHREE PUNJA SAHIB AT HASANABDAL.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org



Guru Nanak Dev, Founder of the Sikh Faith,
With his two devoted disciples, Bala and Mardana.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER I

Spiritual Emancipation

NANAK'S MISSION (1469-1538)

It is usual to say that Sikhism, as founded by Nanak, was a sect of peaceful disciples, and retained its original character until the ministry fell into the hands of Guru Govind Singh. He was, it is said, an ambitious man, and transformed this sect of peaceful devotees into a band of fanatical warriors. It is, undoubtedly, true that the political aspirations of the Sikhs became more pronounced under the leadership of the tenth Guru, but a careful study of the Sikh History must show that the process of transformation had begun long before the time of Guru Govind. Govind himself, in fact, as well as his work, was the natural product of the process of evolution that had been going on ever since the inception of Sikh brotherhood. The seed which blossomed in the time of Guru Govind Singh had been sown by Nanak and watered by his successors. The sword which carved the Khalsa's way to glory was, undoubtedly, forged by Govind, but the steel had been provided by Nanak, who had obtained it, as it were, by smelting the Hindu ore, and burning out the dross of indifference and superstition of the masses and the hypocrisy and pharisaism of the priests.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

"All religious movements," the German Emperor Kaiser Wilhelm once said, "are in reality political movements." And this is true in so far as the inspiration for all great movements comes from religion. Even the mild and tender religion of Buddha led to the establishment and consolidation of the most glorious empire that India had ever seen before the establishment of the British Empire. The untutored Arabs, when inspired by the teaching of the Prophet, carried the flag of victory to Bengal on the one hand and Spain on the other. Europe became what she is now only when Luther enfranchised her intellect, purified her religion, and by breaking the chains which bound her to the Papal chair, raised her from a cringing position to a position of liberty, self-respect and self-assertion. Puritanism led to the establishment of real liberty in England, Puritanism founded the new world, and it was Puritanism that waged and won the War of American Independence. All political progress requires high aspirations, an enterprising spirit. "The will to do the soul to dare," and the purity and integrity of private and public life, and any movement which contributes to the growth of these virtues in a people qualifies them for making political effort and advancing on the path of political glory.

This impetus may sometimes come from Literature, or from the peculiar circumstances of a people, *e. g.*, from a natural re-action

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

against the pressing environment of tyranny and injustice under which a nation might be smarting. But the more common source from which these virtues have flowed has been religion. And nowhere in the world has the relation of political movements to religion been so close as in India. The war of 1857 was chiefly the result of the religious susceptibilities of the Hindu and Muhammadan soldiers which were wounded by the greased cartridges. The Wahabi movement which, at one time, threatened to involve India in a severe frontier war, was professedly a religious movement, a crusade against the infidels. The Kooka riots which resulted in the deportation of Baba Ram Singh and the blowing from guns of many of his followers were mainly caused by religious fanaticism. And, last but not least, the recent convulsion in Bengal reveals the same truth. The actors in this drama have all been religious men, and even those who carried the Bomb in one hand had Bhagavad Gita in the other. The same phenomenon meets our eyes if we glance at the India of more remote times. Sivaji did not found a new sect, but he had received his inspiration from Ram Das,[1] the Nanak of Maharashtra, and it was by rousing the religious spirit of the people, and by proclaiming himself the champion of Hinduism and

1. His memory is adored throughout the Mahratta country and his tomb in Parali, near Satara, attracts thousands of pilgrims.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the protector of the Brahman and the cow that he succeeded in founding an empire. Political sense is wanting in the masses of India, and the privileges and responsibilities of a civic life have not been known to them. They have, since times immemorial, been an intensely religious people, and religion, therefore, has been the chief motive power in all their great undertakings and achievements.

Guru Nanak seems to have thoroughly diagnosed the case of the Hindu community of his time, and found out that a religious revival was the only remedy which could save it from impending destruction. Even if he had been inclined towards politics, he could not have succeeded in ameliorating the condition of the Hindus by either of the two methods of political work. Constitutional agitation would have failed, because there was then no constitution in India. Active resistance of the ruling despotism was out of the question because the Hindus were too weak to make any effective resistance. The condition of the Hindus in the Punjab was indeed most deplorable. This province was the first to be conquered. It lay between two powerful Muhammadan capitals, Delhi and Kabul. The Moslem Government was most thoroughly established there. The wave of proselytism had there spread with an overwhelming force, and the Punjab contained the largest number of converts to Islam. Hindu temples had been levelled to the ground, Hindu Schools and

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Colleges had made room for the mosques. All vestige of Hindu greatness had been obliterated. (During the four and a half centuries that intervened the overthrow of Anangpal[1] and the birth of Guru Nanak himself, History does not tell us the name of a single Hindu in the Punjab Those who had escaped conversion had lost almost all that lends dignity and grace to life and distinguishes religion from superstition or cant.)

Hinduism had never been able to shake off the accretions it had received from Buddhism and Jainism. It had become idolatrous before the advent of Islam. It had adopted the doctrine of incarnation from Jainism. But the onrush of Islam spread such a confusion and consternation among the Hindu ranks that all chances of reconsideration and reform came to an end. The instinct of self-preservation, in any form, and at any sacrifice, became supreme and all-absorbing The storm threatened to sweep everything before it, and the Hindus, evidently, thought it more politic to preserve chaff as well as wheat than to try to winnow and lose both. The priests, the hereditary guardians of Hinduism, lazy and lifeless like all hereditary incumbents of high positions, could not unite all Hindus together so as by one united action to hurl back the waves of invasion. Not

---

1. King of the Punjab, 1001-1021, A.D. Some historians spell the name as Anandpal.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

being able to play the part of Charles Martel or Peter the Hermit and fight in the open field, they shut themselves up in the impregnable fortress of caste. All who were privileged were taken in, the rest were left to fight their own battle as best as they could.[1]

In this fortress the priestly class played the role of commander and anyone in the least deviating from the rules of discipline was severely punished and not seldom driven out of the enclosure.[2]

The popular religion about the time of Nanak's birth, was confined to peculiar forms of eating and drinking, peculiar ways of bathing and painting the forehead and other such mechanical observances. The worship of idols wherever they were permitted to exist, pilgrimages to the Ganges and other sacred places whenever they were allowed, the observance of certain ceremonies like the marital and funeral rites, the obedience to the mandates of the Brahmans and lavishing charitable gifts upon them constituted almost the whole of Hinduism as it was then current among the masses.

---

1. The result was that whereas the majority of twice-born Hindus were saved, the majority of others fell an easy prey to the proselytizing zeal of Islam.

2. It is notorious that even now the least transgression of caste rules, in places where orthodoxy is strong, leads to excommunication, which in many cases results in the transgressors being forced to embrace Islam or Christianity.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

The priests alone could study the scriptures, and to them alone were accessible the higher truths and consolations of Hindu Philosophy. Even they, however, had fallen to the dead level of Scribes and Pharisees. Some of them still had the scriptures by heart but in their practical life they were mostly the opposite of what they were required to be by their scriptures. They were required to be good shepherds to their flocks, but the only function of shepherd they performed was to fleece their flocks. As for administering to their spiritual needs :

'The hungry sheep looked up and were not fed'

"The springs of true religion had been choked up by weeds of unmeaning ceremonial, debasing superstitions, the selfishness of the priests and the indifference of the people. Form had supplanted the reality and the highly spiritual character of Hinduism had been buried under the ostentatious paraphernalia of sects. The centuries of invasion, foreign misrule and persecution had produced the greatest depression and the spiritual subjection and stagnation had aggravated the demoralisation to an enormous degree.

This was the condition in which Guru Nanak found the Hindus of the Punjab. While quite a boy his indignation had been aroused by the hypocrisy and cant that stalked throughout the land. He at once made up

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

his mind to devote his life to the service of his nation, and, by precept and by example, bring his people back to a religion of simplicity and sincerity, to wean them from the worship of stock and stone, restore them to the pure worship of their ancient forefathers and make them once more able to stand their ground as a nation.

Efforts had already been made by some Hindu reformers who preceded Nanak to purify the belief and worship of the Hindus but they failed to make any notable impression, upon the masses owing to the following reasons:—

(*a*) In the first place, most of the reform movements that preceded Nanak were fearfully sectarian, and in many cases only served to make confusion worse confounded. Ramananda, *e.g.*, whose movement gave a powerful stimulus to Hindu revival in Benares, could not shake off the theory of incarnation and instead of preaching, like Nanak, the worship of one God who is never born and never dies, he simply added to the number of existing sects by confining his homage to Rama. Nor were his followers freed from the bondage of external forms. They had to wear peculiar kinds of clothes, to have a particular kind of necklace, and

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

were required to eat and drink apart from all other sects.

Gorakh Nath attempted to penetrate the crust of external forms and ceremonies by teaching the occult science of Yoga,[1] but even he could not escape the narrowing influences of sectarianism. The very nature of his system prevented it from becoming a popular system. On the other hand, the exalted position of Yogis and the great prestige possessed by professors of their esoteric science, combined with the imposing paraphernalia substituted by Gorakh for other sectarian marks, placed great temptations and facilities in the way of imposters. The result was that a new sect was added to the list. Hundreds of monks in ochre robes, with large glass rings in their ears, long winding horns under their arms, and a sharp burnished pair of tongs in their hands were seen infesting the roads and places of pilgrimage. The mass of the nation was as little moved by the blasts from their trumpets as they were themselves made holier by the white ashes on their bodies or the glass rings in their ears. The same may be said, more or less, of all the other religious movements that

---

1. It is not certain when Gorakh lived, though Cunningham puts him in the fifteenth century. Barth, followed by Hopkins, assigns him Buddhist origin. His followers are found everywhere in India. In the Punjab they have an important centre in the Jhelum district called Tilla.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

preceded Nanak. They were, more or less, all sectarian, ritualistic, narrow-minded and bigoted.

(*b*) The second reason why these movements did not sufficiently contribute to the national progress is to be found in the other-worldly character of almost everyone of them. With the exception of Vallabhacharya,[1] (every leader held up renunciation of the world as the highest virtue) The Bairagis of Ramanand, as their name shows, were expected to be the embodiment ofrenunciation. Gorakh's Yogis were strictly enjoined to lead a life of celibacy. Kabir was a married man himself, but he surpassed every body else in the genuine contempt with which he looked down upon the world and worldly belongings. "Wretched is the lot of Kabir," says he. "that a son like Kamal was born to him who would bring home money rather than the name of God." Unlike others, Kabir had risen above sectarianism, but the other-worldly character of his teachings, combined with the

1. A Brahman who founded a sect of Vaishnavas in the beginning of the sixteenth century. "He gave proof of no small intellectual strength and courage in daring openly to repudiate the theories of asceticism, etc.," *Religions of India* by Barth, p. 234.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

fact that he came of a low caste, and that he was born in that strongest of all strongholds of orthodoxy and caste, the city of Benares, prevented his cause from achieving any considerable success. Ramanand, Gorakh, Kabir and even Chaitanya were all impressed with the nothingness of this life. "They aimed chiefly at emancipation from priestcraft or from the grossness of idolatry and polytheism. They perfected forms of dissent rather than planted the germs of nations and their sects remain to this day as they left them[1]." It was reserved for Nanak to perceive the true principles of reform and to lay those foundations on which Govind built a new nationality and "gave practical effect to the doctrine that the lowest is equal with the highest in race as in creed, in political rights as in religious hopes."[2]

---

1. Cunningham : *History of the Sikhs*, page 36. Moreover, it should be remembered that no great reformer had been born in the Punjab and the activities of the others were more or less confined to other parts of India.

2. *History of the Sikhs*, p. 37. This knowledge cannot have been acquired by a regular study of books. For we find, in the *Adi Granth*, very few references to the contents of the scriptures of any religion, as we find in the tenth Guru's Granth ; and, besides this,

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

The qualifications which Nanak possessed for the tremendous task of awakening a depressed, demoralised, superstitious and priest-ridden race were not those one would look for in a reformer of the present times. Nanak was sent to school but of education in the ordinary sense of the word he acquired little or nothing. "There is reason to believe," says Cunningham, "that in his youth he made himself familiar with the popular creeds, both of the Mohammadans and Hindus, and that he gained a general knowledge of the Koran and of the Brahmanical Shastras."[1] But

---

Nanak's criticism of other systems is not scholarly; practice, rather than doctrine, forming the subject of his attacks upon the existing creeds. Cunningham also says on the authority of a Persian manuscript that Nanak's first teacher was a Muhammadan. This seems to be an effort on the part of a Moslem writer to give the credit of Nanak's subsequent greatness to the teachings of Islam. Nanak's father was a *Patwari* or village accountant, and naturally, Kaloo would have been anxious to teach his son the language which would have qualified him to take his place after his death. This language, as a matter of fact, was Hindi, for Persian as an official language had not been introduced until the time of Todar Mal, the great Financial Minister of Akbar. The author of *Panth Prakash* says that Nanak went to School with Gopal Pandit to learn accounts in Hindi when he was only seven years of age, and began Sanskrit when he was nine years old.

1. The author of *Sair-ul-Mutaakhirin* states that Nanak was educated by one Muhammad Hassan, a neighbour of his father's who was childless and loved Nanak.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the fitness of Nanak to work out the redemption of his race did not lie in the scraps of knowledge he might have picked up either in a Pathshala or a mosque. He was born great, and though almost illiterate, was, like Muhammad, richly endowed by nature with a powerful intellect and strong common sense. He did not teach anything new, but whatever he said bore the impress of originality, and displayed the genius of a master mind. He did not write long theses and dissertations to establish his points or demolish his adversaries and did not quote Manu and Vyasa or the Koran and Hadis, but whenever he argued a point, his practical wisdom and strong common sense always prevailed over the logic and theology of his opponents. The Nawab of Sultanpur,[1] the Qazis of Mecca,[2] the Pandits

---

While admitting the possibility of Nanak's having sat at the feet of Gopal as well as Muhammad Hassan, I cannot believe that he attained any degree of proficiency either in Sanskrit or Persian. His compositions in Hindi and his one or two stanzas in Persian would, I believe, bear out my statement.

1. The Nawab once called him and asked him to join him in saying Nimaz. Nanak assented, but as the Nawab engaged in prayers, Nanak stood aloof. On being questioned why he had not joined in the prayers, he promptly replied "How could I join you when you were wandering in Kabul buying horses and the Qazi was all the time thinking of his colt, lest it should have fallen into the well." Needless to say that the Nawab and the Qazi were both silenced by this frank and fearless answer.

2. It is given in all Lives of Guru Nanak that he visited Mecca and lay down there with his feet

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

of Hardwar,[1] and the Pandas of Kurushetra,[2] every one bowed before his manly courage and fearless logic of facts.

---

towards the Kaaba. Being scolded by the Qazi, he asked him what fault he had committed. "You sleep with your feet towards the house of "God," said the Qazi, "and you ask what fault you have committed." "Pardon me," said Nanak, "you may turn my feet in the direction where you think the house of God is not." Sohan Lal and Ms. Or 187 say the incident occurred at *M*edina. It is not worth while going further into the matter, as the incidents of time and place are not so relevant to the present purpose.

1. Seeing some Brahmans offering water to the Sun, Nanak entered into the Ganges and began to throw water with his hands towards the West. The Pandits thought him a rustic and asked him what he meant by his foolish act. "I am watering", said Nanak, "a little farm I have at Kartarpur" (Punjab). "Fool", said the Pandits, "do you think the water will reach two hundred miles to water your farm?" "If the water", retorted Nanak, "which I have been shoving with both hands will not reach the little distance of two hundred miles, how can you expect that your handful will get all the way to the Sun?"

2. Nanak once attended the great fair which is usually held at Kurukshetra on the occasion of the Sun eclipse. Some Hindus look upon the phenomenon as the arrest of the Sun by his creditors Rahu and Ketu. Alms are given and a perfect fast is observed during the eclipse. Nanak lighted a fire and began to cook a pot of meat. The Pandas were soon upon him and he was subjected to a severe fire of abuse and reproach. He explained the whole thing to them and convinced them that the heavenly phenomenon had nothing to do with the affairs of man on the earth.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Naturally meditative and thoughtful, his wisdom and knowledge were immensely increased by his life-long travels and discussions with scholars and saints, both of his own community as well as those of the Muhammadan world

The chief features of Guru Nanak's work may be summed up in the following words :—

(*a*) He was the first Hindu reformer of modern times who tried to emancipate the Hindu mind completely from the fetters of mythology. It was he who taught the Hindus after long, long ages that there was not only one God, but He was free from the bondage of birth and death, that He was above Vishnu, above Brahma, superior to Shiva, and the creator of Rama and Krishna.

(*b*) He declared that God alone was to be worshipped and that He was not to be degraded by making any images of Him and worshipping those images. He was to be worshipped in the spirit, by constantly meditating over His name, and feeling and realizing His presence in every place and at every time.

(*c*) He declared that truth was greater than all sacrifices and all pilgrimages

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

and the love of God better than all religious rites and ceremonies.

(*d*) That the only way of salvation lay through devotion to God combined with good actions. That feeding the Brahmans, the giving of cows in charity, the reading of the Vedas or the Koran, the mere performance of Sandhya or Nimaz were not the means of salvation.

(*e*) He emphatically asserted that the Brahmans and the Mullahs who followed religion as a profession were not the true guides to truth, that they were like the blind leading the blind, and that the way of salvation, the way of devoting yourself entirely to God, could only be shown by a true Guru who has himself trodden that path.

(*f*) He made a powerful attack on the sacerdotal classes of both communities and declared that all were equal in the eyes of God, who, he said, was the common father of all. Men are brothers, he said, and must live as brothers, guiding their actions by justice and love.

(*g*) After centuries of subjection, Nanak was the first among the Hindus to

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

raise his voice against tyranny and oppression.

(*h*) Nanak, on the one hand condemned selfishness, avarice and worldliness in general, and on the other denounced the practice of those who unwilling to fight the battle of life retired from the world under the pretence of cultivating spirituality. Some of his fiercest attacks are directed against those who put on the ochre robes of the Sadhus and shirking the responsibilities of life sought refuge in renunciation and aimless wandering from one place to another He had himself married and had children. He had been working as a man of business for a considerable part of his life, and had thus shown, by example, how one could live in the

---

1. Nanak often expressed himself very strongly against the aggressive fanaticism of Islam, and adverted in pathetic language to the sufferings of the Hindus. Says he, "The age is a dagger, the rulers are the butchers. *Dharma* has taken wings to itself and has flown away. The *amavasya* or darkness of falsehood reigns supreme. No one can see the moon of Truth." See also the stanzas addressed to Bhai Lallo at Eminabad. The author of the *Panth Prakash* says that Nanak was once imprisoned by Sikandar Lodhi for refusing to show a miracle. It stands more to reason that the real cause was Nanak's plain-spoken criticism which would be called treason or sedition in the language of the present times.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

world and yet not be of the world, acting upon the teaching of the Gita which says, "Whosoever does his duties without attachment, consecrating his deeds to God, verily, sin does not touch him, just as a lotus leaf, though in water, is not affected by it."[1]

The whole system of Nanak, thus, stands distinguished from other reform movements by two important peculiarities; its non-sectarian character, and, secondly, its reconciliation with secular life. It was, therefore, bound to produce the following two effects, *viz* :—

(1) It leavened the whole Hindu thought in the Punjab and improved the moral and spiritual tone of the whole people. Here was, now, for the first time after ages of dissension and discord, a hero whom every Hindu[2] could call his own, and of whom every Hindu could feel justly proud. The appearance of Nanak was a great step towards arousing consciousness of a common nationality. Since Hindu Kings had fallen, Nanak was the first Hindu hero who could command the allegiance of all parties, because he did

1. *Bhagawad Gita*, V. 10.

2. Except the priestly class whose prestige and income were threatened by the popularity of the new Reformer.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

not identify himself with any party. Though he attacked all parties, tore their cherished beliefs into shreds, he became the popular hero because it was soon found that he had destroyed only that which was not genuine but a mere addition or an accretion to their religion.

(2) The second effect which Nanak's teaching produced was to show to the Hindus that the highest worldly ambition was not incompatible with the purest and godliest life. Buddhism and Jainism and later Hinduism, as affected by both, have always held forth renunciation as the highest virtue, and have looked upon worldly power and prosperity as contemptible, to be tolerated in certain cases as a mere necessary evil. Nanak changed all this. He put the seal of his sanction and approval on all worldly pursuits, provided that they were not indulged in at the cost of righteousness and truth.

This was evidently the seed which under the fostering care of Nanak's successors grew into the gigantic tree of the Khalsa power.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER II

Sikhs Form a Community

FIRST STEPS AT ORGANISATION (1538-1575)

Nanak lived nearly seventy years, and towards the end of his life, after travelling through the length and breadth of India and some foreign countries, he had settled down at Kartarpur, a village which had been founded by himself. Here he built a Dharmsala and continued to teach the crowds of people who now flocked to him from all parts of the Punjab. When he died, in 1538, he had already transformed the lives of thousands of Hindus who had come in personal contact with him, and by his noble life and inspiring teaching had produced a new atmosphere in the country in which no one could breathe without being healthier and stronger in the spirit. Nanak left the Hindus of the Punjab immensely better than he had found them. Their belief had been ennobled, their worship purified, the rigidity of caste considerably relaxed, their minds greatly emancipated, and they were now more fit to enter on the career of national progress to which Nanak's successors were destined to lead them. The seed had been sown. It had fallen on good soil, and with careful nursing it was bound to

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

yield a plentiful crop when the time became ripe for it.

Although the object of Nanak was simply to leaven the social and religious thought of the Hindus, and to improve the general tone of their moral and spiritual life, and he had never thought of founding a sect, yet he was anxious that his work should continue after his death[1]. With this object in view he appointed as his successor a Khatri, Lehna by name, one of his own disciples, whom he preferred to his own sons, and who had shown, by his exemplary character, extraordinary piety and unflinching devotion[2], his fitness to occupy Nanak's position.

Lehna, who was now called Angad, forming as it were, a part and parcel of his Guru's self, no sooner ascended the Gaddi than

---

1. Nanak had, no doubt, greatly succeeded in reviving the dying Hindu Society, which was now fairly on the way to convalescence, but environments were still so unfavourable, the orthodox priesthood being still so strong, that he feared a relapse, unless some one was appointed to look after the patient. Had Nanak died without a successor there would have been no Sikhism to-day or at best simply another Kabirism.

2. Many stories of Lehna's devotion are given in the *Panth Prakash* and other books, *e.g.*, his jumping into a muddy pool at the instance of Nanak to take out a cup; his readiness even to eat a carcase at his Ghru's bidding, his faithful adherence to Nanak during the latter's feigned insanity when even his own sons had deserted him, *etc.*

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

he realised the danger to which the mission of his master was exposed. For all practical purposes the people were as orthodox as Nanak had found them. The ritualistic side of Hinduism had not been at all interfered with by Nanak. The rites and ceremonies were performed, on the same lines and by the same priests, and though the value of such observances was considerably lowered in the eyes of those who had come in contact with Nanak, they were still adhered to.

The personal magnetism of Nanak was so great that he had succeeded in winning the love and allegiance of thousands who had come under his direct influence. And there is not the least doubt, that if he were so minded he could have easily established a church of his own, introduced his own social and religious code, and established an independent community entirely free from the restrictions of caste and the domination of Hindu priesthood. This was not, however, his object. He did not want to cut himself off from the Hindu community. He wanted to live in it, work with it, and by his noble example and lofty teaching to raise it to a higher level of social and religious life. His successor followed the same policy, but he realised that Nanak's mission should nevertheless possess a distinctive character, and his followers, though forming a part of the main body, should have on individuality of their own. He perceived the necessity of saving

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

them from total absorption by the Hindu mass. In order that the influences started by Nanak might continue to work, it was essential that those influences should be perpetuated, and a community created, which, though forming a part of the same host, should march a little apart as its advance guard.[1]

Guru Angad employed the following three means to secure the individuality of those who had accepted Nanak's mission :—

(1) The first and most important was the invention of Gurmukhi characters[2] which

---

1. It might sound strange to call these uneducated people as the advance guard of Hinduism, but the fact is that of learning, dialectic Theology and Philosophy, the Hindus had, even in those dark days, enough. It was faith, devotion and earnestness that they lacked, and ignorant as the early Sikhs were, by virtue of these qualifications they led the way and drew the whole Hindu Punjab after them.

2. From a nationalistic point of view it might be objected that the new Script provided a new line of cleavage between the Hindus and the Sikhs and added a fresh difficulty to the task of future Hindu reformers to consolidate the whole Hindu race. It might also be objected that the Gurmukhi alphabet is crude and imperfect and was quite unnecessary.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that it is more easily acquired than any other alphabet, while as a means of asserting Sikh individuality, its value cannot be overrated. No more crushing blow to the predominance of the Brahman could be devised, and if Brahmans are still supreme even among the Sikhs it is because of their intellectual and spiritual superiority.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

became the special Script of the Sikhs, and in which all their sacred books are written. Gurmukhs, in the *Adi Granth* and generally in the Punjab, is applied to those who faithfully follow the commands of the Guru, as opposed to *Manmukh*, or one who looks to his own will for help and guidance The very name of the new Script, therefore, reminded those who employed it, of their duty towards their Guru, and constantly kept alive in their minds the consciousness that they were something distinct from the common mass of Hinduism, that they were regenerated, liberated and saved. It also dealt a powerful blow to the domination of the priestly class. The importance of the Brahman greatly rested upon his knowledge of Sanskrit which was the language of religion. When Punjabi, written in Gurmukhi characters, attained to the same position of sanctity, as it soon after did, the prestige of the Brahman was bound to suffer. The third effect of the introduction of this new alphabet was to increase the number of literates, and, by making religious literature accessible to the masses in their mother-tongue, to facilitate the reform work of the Gurus.

(2) The next step taken by Guru Angad was the compilation of Guru Nanak's memoirs. Bala, who had been the life-long companion of the deceased Guru and had accompanied him in nearly all his travels,

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

related from his memory all that he had seen and heard of Nanak since his boyhood to his death, and the Guru committed it to writing. Nanak was the first Punjabi poet to achieve any popularity and fame, and his memoirs compiled by Guru Angad formed the first prose work in the Punjabi language [1] The book soon became a favourite with the followers of Nanak and, as it contained his teachings as well as memoirs, it at once established its position as the sacred book of the Sikhs[2], and the Ramayana and Mahabharta being inaccessible to them, it became the only source of moral and religious instruction to thousands who never knew a word of Sanskrit, and could not, or would not, pay the Brahmans.

(3) The third method adopted by Angad to popularise the mission of Nanak and keep up the enthusiasm of his followers was the starting of a *Langar* or a free Kitchen. The system had already been set on foot by Nanak and was simply enlarged and expanded by Angad The institution proved a powerful aid in the propaganda work. In the first

---

1. It was not only the first prose work of the Punjabi literature, but, so far as I know, it was the first religious work written in the popular dialect of the province.

2. In this respect it resembled the New Testament more than any religious work of the Hindus, parables and miracles not excepted.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

place it did the same service as the orphanages, hospitals, asylums and other charitable institutions started by the Christian Missionaries, not only as a means of relieving the destitute and the needy, but also as a most efficient means of advertisement and popularity. Secondly, it gave a new direction to the charities of the Guru's followers. Of almshouses supported by Hindu individuals, there was, and has always been, plenty; but, the *Langar* of the Guru was probably the first to be supported by the combined contributions of a community, and it taught the Sikhs the first lesson of contributing money towards a common fund. Thirdly, charity being the root of religion and the charities of the Sikhs flowing into the fund of Guru, their religious sentiment could not move in any other direction, so that the duty of supporting the *Langar* not only concentrated the attention of the Sikhs upon their Guru, but being the object of common patronage and support, it served as a strong bond of union among the new brotherhood. Fourthly, this institution proved a powerful weapon to break the crust of caste, as all Sikhs[1], rich or poor Brahmans or Sudras, dined together without any distinction.

---

1. Though principally meant for the poor, the *Langar* also supplied food to those followers who went on a visit to the Guru, and even princes thought it their duty and an act of merit to dine in the Guru's hall with all castes and classes present there.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

By these measures and active preaching work, Guru Angad succeeded in giving a sort of local habitation and a name to the mission of Nanak The Sikhs now began gradually to drift away from the orthodox Hindu society and form a class, a sort of new brotherhood, by themselves. In their observance of religious rites they were like other Hindus and still retained many of their superstitions, but in the simplicity of their faith, their ardour and earnestness they rather resembled their Aryan ancestors—unsophisticated by casuistry, untrammelled by caste ; simple, manly and enthusiastic in their pure and primitive faith.

The measures adopted by the second Guru had considerably contributed to the inception of a new community, and had sown the first seeds of some kind of organisation among the Sikhs . But the Sikhs were so far only a religious community and there were in them as yet no marked traits by which they could be distinguished from other religious sects into which Hinduism was at that time divided. Hinduism is essentially other-worldly and while religious enthusiasm leads a Muhammadan to the field of battle, and a Christian to the deserts of Africa to preach the Gospel there ; a Hindu, when moved by strong religious emotion, is driven inwards, and falls into a frame of mind which impresses him with the nothingness of the world and the folly and vanity of all human desires. A

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Vedic Hindu was no doubt different, and was never ashamed of wishing for all sorts of worldly blessings, for children, for wealth, for valour, for freedom, for kingdom, for victory and glory, and last but not least, even for the annihilation of his enemies. A Hindu of the modern times under centuries of enervating influence of Jainism and demoralising foreign subjection is quite a different creature from his Aryan ancestors. When he is moved by religion, the sentiments of tenderness, contentment and unworldliness are, as a rule, aroused more strongly in him than courage, enthusiasm, philanthrophy and missionary spirit.

Sikhism in its earlier stages was, therefore, exposed to a serious danger. It was not only liable to relapse into orthodoxy, against which Guru Angad had tried his best to guard it, but there was the greater danger of its degenerating into a narrow sect of ascetical enthusiasts or fanatics. There is no doubt that Guru Nanak was himself a married man and had not spoken of married life in contemptuous or condemnatory terms. But the transitory character of all earthly pleasures and possessions and the hollowness of all earthly love and friendship[1] had been so constantly

1. In the *Panth Prakash* Nanak is described to have impressed the point upon the minds of his followers by comparing the world to an ever-young and charming maiden always trying to ensnare mankind by her blandishments. The majority fall a prey to her machinations. It is only the noble and the brave who can escape her charms.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

hammered upon even by him that an active zeal for worldly pursuits was nearly as far from a Hindu heart as it had been before the advent of Nanak. His followers were still prone to believe that the world was nothing, that it was all *maya*, a delusion and a mirage.

This danger was heightened by the co-existence of a rival system which also *prima Facie* possessed the same credentials, and claimed the same amount of sanctity as Nanak's Mission. Guru Nanak had two sons, Sri Chand and Lakshmi Chand. The latter married and settled down as a worldly man, but Sri Chand renounced the world, and became an ascetic. He founded the *Udasi* sect and instructed his followers to remain single and have no fixed homes and no property. The other teachings of the sect were the same as those of Nanak and it regarded Nanak with the same veneration as his Sikhs did. Sri Chand lived to be a very old man, and while Sikhism had lost its founder, Udasism flourished under the personal care and guidance of its propounder. And as the reverence and adherence commanded by a system in India are proportionate to the amount of self-denial and renunciation practised by its founder and followers, Udasism was gaining ground every day. Then again when it came to the time of the third Guru, another circumstance turned up which gave the question a personal character. Amar Das, the third Guru, had been appointed by Guru Angad, and the question now was whether to

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

support and follow the son of Nanak himself or the nominee of his nominee. Pious as Amar Das surely was, his rival possessed the great advantage of being a recluse and ascetic, and, therefore, apparently superior as a spiritual guide. The tide was turning in his rival's favour, and it required all the power and statesmanship of Amar Das to save the infant church from an early death. Happily for the Khalsa, the old Guru rose to the occasion and saved it from a premature grave. The Guru appealed to the people by pointing out the example set by Guru Nanak himself, how one could live in the world and still not be of the world.[1] He pointed out to them that Guru Nanak had struck out a middle path between asceticism and worldliness, as was amply shown by the fact that in choosing his successor he had passed over both his sons, one for over-worldliness, and the other, the founder of Udasism himself, for his asceticism.[2] On the other hand, fortunately for Amar Das, Sri Chand was a real ascetic and with true cynical indifference, characteristic of his sect, did not care to contend for the leadership of the infant church, perhaps also because the

1. *Grihasth manh udas, viz.*, "Renunciation while in the world" was the motto placed by this Guru before his followers. See also *Gita*, v. 10.

2. This also shows that though Guru Nanak's mission was mainly the spiritual emancipation of the Hindus, he was not unmindful of their temporal welfare.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

leadership as yet carried no great power or prestige so as to appeal to the lower sentiments of the great recluse.

There being no active opposition, Guru Amar Das won an easy and complete victory over his formidable rival, and though the Udasis are still to be met with in all parts of the Punjab, the Sikhs were once for all separated from them, and raised above asceticism, were free and fit to follow their course of national progress.

The credit is also due to the same Guru for taking the first steps towards the organisation of the Sikhs. Their numbers had increased and they were spread over the whole province of the Punjab. The work of teaching and preaching and administering to their spiritual needs could not, therefore, be carried on properly. Guru Amar Das, consequently, divided the whole country inhabited by his followers into twenty-two dioceses, or *Manjas*[1] as they were called. A pious and influential Sikh was placed at the head of each province who acted as a bishop and vicegerent of the Guru, and carried on the pastoral work in his diocese. I have not been able to discover the names of these provinces or their incumbents. *Suraj Parhask* has devoted about 3,000 large pages of Prakash

1. *Manja* is the masculine of *Manji* meaning a *charpai*, a kind of bed used in India. It was a substitute for the diocesan gaddi which the Guru's vicegerents occupied.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

small type to the history of the Gurus, but has absolutely made no mention of any of these *Manjas*. *Panth Prakash* merely quotes the analogy of Akbar's twenty-two provinces and of bankers' and merchants' branches, and says that the Guru likewise established twenty two branch *gaddis* or centres for administering to the religious needs of the Sikhs.

It is evident that this measure of the third Guru must have gone a long way in stregthening the foundations of the Church and in carrying on the propaganda in all parts of the country. We shall see later on how the fifth Guru built on these foundations the beautiful edifice of self-government for the Sikhs in the heart of the Moghul Empire.

strengthening

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER III

Increasing Power and Influence of the Gurus

WORK OF GURU RAM DAS (1575-1582)

The Sikhs had now become a community, their numbers had reached thousands, and Guru Amar Das had organised them into twenty-two dioceses and put them under his bishops. The influence of the new Church was now daily on the increase. Among other things the following circumstances materially contributed to the Guru's growing power and influence :—

1. The foundation of public buildings and towns.

(*a*) Guru Nanak himself had founded the village of Kartarpur where he built the first Dharmsala or Chapel of the Sikhs. He had also started a free dining hall in connection with the Chapel and here he taught his followers during the last few years of his life when he had once more settled down with his family after his life-long travels in India and other countries.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

(*b*) Guru Amar Das founded the village of Govindwal[1] on the Beas in 1546 A.D. under the directions of Guru Angad, and afterwards built a splendid *Bawli*, or well with steps, which formed, so to say, the first important place of pilgrimage of the Sikhs.[2]

(*c*) The most important achievement of this kind was, however, the foundation of the city of Amritsar, by Guru Ram Das who succeeded to the *Gaddi* as the fourth Guru.

"The site was marked by a small natural pool of water which was

---

1. The site of the village really belonged to one Govinda Khatri of the Marwah clan, and he had tried to found a village there, but the site was said to be haunted, and the few daring settlers had been driven away by robbers and dacoits. The spiritual power of the Guru laid the ghost and deterred the robbers, and a flourishing village soon grew up.

2. It is a fine structure and has altogether 84 steps leading to the surface of the water. Eighty four represents the traditional *Chaurasi* or the series of 84 hundred thousand lives through which the Soul has to pass again and again until it attains salvation. The belief among some Sikhs is that bathing and reciting the whole of Japji at each of the steps releases them from the bonds of transmigration. The place is still visited by crowds of people, twice a year, on the Hindu New Year's Day and the death anniversary of Guru Amar Das, when large fairs are held and the poor are fed in thousands.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

supposed to have been a favourite resort of Guru Nanak. On the margin of this pool Guru Ram Das erected himself a hut. Soon after in 1577, he obtained a grant of the site together with 500 *Bighas* of land from the Emperor Akbar, on payment of Rs. 700 *Akbari* to Zemindars of Tung who owned the land. The pool soon acquired a reputation for sanctity, and, the followers of the Guru migrating to the spot, a small town gradually grew up, known at first as Ramdaspur or *Guru Ka Chak*. The pool improved and formed into a tank, acquired the name of Amritsar or "tank of nectar or immortality," whence the name of the present city.[1]

The foundation of the city of Amritsar helped the cause of the Gurus in two ways :—

(1) Being situated in the heart of the tract occupied by the sturdy Hindu peasantry, it enabled the Gurus to secure followers from their ranks, who ultimately proved the bulwark of their warlike successors, as recruits from the same area are proving a bulwark of the British Empire in India to-day.

(2) Amritsar has always held the highest position of any town or city in the province

---

1. *Gazetteer of the Amritsar District*, 1883-84.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

as a centre of trade. The connections of its merchants are not confined to Hindustan, but extend to Bokhara, Kabul and Kashmir, and are of old standing, long anterior to the advent of the British Government in the Punjab. During the time of the Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Amritsar used to yield, from customs alone, nine lakhs of rupees per annum.

This commercial importance of Amritsar proved a source of vast revenue to the Gurus when the crowds attracted to the town were further swelled by the sanctity it assumed by becoming the Mecca of the Sikhs under Arjun, the fifth Guru.

11.—The second circumstance which considerably contributed to the increasing prestige and influence of the Gurus was to be found in Akbar's friendship. It is important to note that the Gurus never made any effort to seek the friendship, far less the patronage of the ruling dynasty. Their piety and altruistic principles drew the high as well as the low to them. And while they always welcomed the most lowly and the despised to their Church, they were too politic to alienate the high-placed and the powerful by an attitude of arrogance and cynicism by which many a Diogenes of India, even at the present time, sneers at wealth and power as something too mean to deserve any regard at his hands.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Guru Amar Das had numbered many of the hill chieftains among his followers who contributed thousands to the funds of the Church, but the greatest triumph[1] of the Church, in the eyes of the people, was scored when the Guru's fame brought the great Akbar to his doors

Mirza Jafar Beg, the Governor of Lahore, had been deeply impressed by the piety and noble character of the Guru. When his son, Tahir Beg, joined the forces of Akbar in the siege of Chittour, which proved even in the hands of Akbar a hard nut to crack, and Akbar felt the need of divine intercession[2], Tahir spoke in the most glowing terms

---

1. It might be thought that official patronage might have been harmful to the Church which was, one day, destined to play so important a part in pulling down the empire built up by Akbar. The Guru, however, refused all offers of *Jagirs* and other kinds of patronage. The mere existence of friendly relations with the Government of the day, without any dependence on its favours, could not do any harm to the Church in its *infantine* state.

2. Akbar was undoubtedly a cultured prince but he deos not seem to have escaped some superstitions of the day. Although he did not carry on his head the images of all the saints as Louis XI did on his hat, yet it is certain that in times of difficulty he resorted for help to holy men and holy shrines. His pilgrimage to the Jwala Mukhi temple might have been a mere concession to Hindu superstition and an effort at conciliation, but it is certain that his faith in

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

of the great piety and spiritual powers of Guru Amar Das. Akbar sent a trusted official, one Bhagwan Das Khatri of Sirhind, to beseech the Guru to pray for his success. The Guru was then engaged in the construction of the *Bawli* and is stated[1] to have said that Chittour would fall as soon as the wheel[2] of the well would settle in position. Akbar afterwards paid a visit to Guru Amar Das, and a strong friendship grew up between the two great men. After the death of Amar Das, Akbar held his successor in the same respect, and, as time went on, the relations between Ram Das and Akbar grew more and more friendly.

Akbar's friendship with the Gurus operated in two ways for the benefit of the Church. In the first place, it increased the prestige of the Gurus and made their mission more popular with the higher classes of the society. *Yatha Raja Tatha Praja*, as is the King, so are the subjects. The truth of this

---

Dervishes and shrines was more than a mere time-serving policy. It is stated on good authority that he several times went on foot on a pilgrimage to the shrines of Nizam-ud-Din Aulia and Muin-ud-Din Chishti. See *Ferishta*, p. 490.

1. *Panth Prakash* by Gyan Singh Gyani. The Guru probably did not know anything about the history of Chittour or Rana Pratap.

2. The wooden wheel on which the wall of the well is built and supported.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

proverb is nowhere better illustrated than in India, the land of its birth. The early recruits to all new Churches are the cast off of established organisations The early Sikhs too were those who had the lowest place in the Hindu Society The attentions of the Sovereign, however tolerant and broad-minded by nature he may be, are bound to tell in favour of the object of his attention, and the *Panth Parkash* says that the very fact of Akbar's doing homage to the Guru brought crowds of followers to the fold of Sikhism.

The other way in which Akbar's friendship was turned to account by the Gurus was by taking advantage of it to relieve oppression or popular suffering.

Two notable instances of it are recorded in the *Panth Prakash* and other books.

(1) When Guru Amar Das was on his way to Hardwar with a large caravan of pilgrims, he was stopped and asked to pay toll which stood at the rate of Rs. 1/4/- per head. The Guru who had a large crowd with him refused to pay The matter reached the ears of the authorities who decided in favour of the Guru, and the result was that all the pilgrims were allowed to pass without paying anything at all.

(2) The other instance is much more important and though not mentioned in *Panth*.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Parkash is given in Latif's *History of the Punjab* (p. 252) Akbar had lain encamped in Lahore for about a year with a large army. As a consequence the prices had considerably risen, and the poor peasantry of the Punjab had greatly suffered from the scarcity of grain. The harvest-time was at hand when Akbar was preparing to march off. The Guru saw that the prices would suddenly fall, and the peasantry, whom the scarcity of the year had driven into debt, would be completely ruined. Therefore, when Akbar saw the Guru before marching, and asked him in the Oriental fashion, if he could be of any service to the Guru, he laid the case of the peasantry before the Emperor and asked him to remit the whole land-tax for the year. Akbar readily consented and the impending catastrophe was prevented. This timely intercession immensely increased the popularity of the Guru, and made him an idol with the peasantry of Majha and Malwa, who in course of time provided almost all the fighting strength of Govind, and ultimately transformed Sikhism into a military power.

(3) The third circumstance which added to the prestige and power of the Gurus was a change in the policy of the Gurus as regards succession. The object of the founder of Sikhism was not to make the office hereditary in the family of any Guru, but the rule was broken in a very curious way. The third Guru had a son, but he

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

was so attached to his daughter, and his son-in-law had proved so dutiful, pious and intelligent, that the Guru rewarded his daughter's love and his son-in-law's devotion and ability by conferring the *Gaddi* upon the latter in preference to his own son.[1] It seems, however, that his daughter was not quite satisfied with this favour.

The Guru was very old now, and it seems that his daughter, always ardently devoted to him, was now his only consolation, and looked after his personal comforts, and nursed him with the tenderest care. It is said that one day when the Guru was engaged in his ablutions a leg of the footstool broke down[2] and crushed the hand of the lady who

---

1. This young man whose name was Mohan otherwise also fell short of the standard required by the Gurus for their successors in as much as he was too unworldly, and passed days and nights in close seclusion, practising the Yoga and other austerities.

2. In the *Suraj Prakash* it is said that the Guru was going to sit on a *Chouki* or chair to engage in meditation when Bhani, the daughter of the Guru, seeing one of its legs out of order put her arm under the chair. The arm was bruised and when the Guru saw it he was greatly affected. It is also said that the lady did not ask for the *Gaddi*, but one day it so happened that her infant son Arjun toddled to his grandfather's Gaddi and took his seat there. "Don't be impatient, dear." said the Guru "you will take it from your father." This evidently meant that Ram Das was to succeed after him and then the *Gaddi* was to go to the latter's son. The version given in the text is traditional and is followed by Cunninghan. *History of Sikhs*, p. 47.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

was helping her aged father. A nail pierced her delicate hand which began to bleed profusely The Guru saw the water turned crimson and asked her what the matter was. "Nothing, Sire," said the lady, as calm as ever, and explained the whole thing to her father. The Guru was overpowered with emotion, and, overcome with gratitude and affection, asked her if there was anything in the world that he could do for her. The fond mother declared that she would be fully satisfied if His Holiness made the office of Gurusship hereditary in her own family. The Guru was taken aback at this bold request which he had little anticipated, but the word had been given and there was no turning back.[1] The boon was granted, and thenceforth the Gurusship became hereditary in the family of Ram Das. This changed the whole character of Gurusship and "materially contributed to the growth of Sikh power, for henceforward the Guru was looked upon by his disciples not only in the light of a spiritual guide but also as a worldly lord and a ruling sovereign."[2] The Guru who was merely a *satgur* or a true guide at first became *Sachcha Padshah* or the true king.

1. It was in the power of every Guru to dispose of the office in whatever way he liked, so that Ram Das himself, were he so minded, could have made it hereditary in his own line. But this would have been rather against the rules of propriety and opposed to the general custom. Etiquette and policy, therefore, required that the sanction of the granter should be taken.

2. Mohd. Latif. *History of the Punjab.* (p. 253).

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER IV

Foundation of Sikh Theocracy

ORGANISATION BY GURU ARJUN (1582-1607)

The Sikhs had now asserted their own individuality, a definite secular turn had been given to their ambition, some slight foundation of organisation had been laid by the establishment of the twenty-two bishoprics under Amar Das, and the public institutions founded by that Guru and his successor, together with the prestige derived from the friendship of the Emperor, had considerably strengthened the foundations of the Sikh Church. Now appeared on the scene a man who was a born poet, a practical philosopher, a powerful organiser and a great statesman. While yielding to none of his predecessors in piety and spiritual excellence, Arjun, who succeeded as fifth Guru, excelled everyone of them in the gifts which are required for the building up of a state. The time for military resistance had not yet come. The tolerance of Akbar and the mild affability of his son had prevented the Moghul despotism from becoming a galling yoke. The need for active resistance, therefore, was not felt so keenly, and the power of Akbar and Jahangir was too great yet to allow a free scope to the ambition of any democratic

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

leader. And even if Arjun had any ambition for political power, he must have perceived that the time was not ripe for its realisation. Consequently he addressed himself with characteristic foresight and patience to the task of organising his followers on peaceful lines.

The steps which Guru Arjun took for the purpose may be described as follows :—

1. The compilation of the Adi Granth. The only book of their sect which the Sikhs had up to that time was a biography of Guru Nanak which the second Guru had compiled from material orally supplied by Bala. As soon as Arjun ascended the *Gaddi*, he felt the need of placing some sort of Bible in the hands of his followers and turned his attention, first of all, to supply this desideratum. Copies of the first three Gurus' works were procured from Mohan, the son of the third Guru. The works of Guru Ram Das were supplied by Arjun himself.[1] To these were added Arjun's own

---

1. It is most remarkable that except three Gurus, one of whom died in his infancy, all the Gurus were poets and some of them of great excellence. This, of course, implies that the persons to whom the various parts of the *Granth* are ascribed were really their authors. There is a suggestion in *Panth Prakash* that Guru Arjun put down some of his own compositions as those of some of the *Bhaktas* who are classed among the authors. The language of these portions, however, belies this theory.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

works together with selections from the writings of some celebrated Bhaktas, and panegyrics of some poets and minstrels in praise of the Gurus themselves. The compilation occupied many years of Arjun's life, and, when completed, it at once occupied in the regard of the Sikhs a position such as that of the Vedas, the Bible or the Koran[1].

2. Simultaneously with the compilation of the Adi Granth, Guru Arjun attempted to give a Mecca to the Sikhs. The town of Amritsar whose foundations had been laid by Ram Das occupies a central position in the Punjab, and stands at the head of the Majha district which forms the stronghold of Sikhism to-day. Arjun realized the importance of having a flourishing city at such a strategic place and set himself to work to raise the little village of Ramdaspur, as the town was then called after its founder, into an important town. Ram Das had built the tank of nectar which was already climbing up into rivalry with the sacred Ganges in the eyes of the Sikhs[2] Arjun added to the sanctity and splendour of the place by building Harmandir or the Temple

---

1. For further notice of the book see Appendix, *Sikh Scriptures.*

2. Although the ashes of their dead are still carried to Hardwar by the Sikhs, Amritsar is their chief place of pilgrimage, and it is only to throw the ashes of their dead that the Ganges is now visited by majority of them.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

of God in the midst of the great tank, and it is this temple which, in its present form as the Golden Temple of Amritsar, forms one of the wonders of India and of the world.

3. Not only was the importance of the new town increased by Arjun as the chief place of Sikh pilgrimage, but by transferring his headquarters to the place, he made it the centre of Sikh activity. It became, in fact, the capital and metropolis of the infant commonwealth that the genius of Arjun was gradually and peacefully building up. The Guru, according to the *Panth Prakash*, is also stated to have induced his leading followers to come and settle in Amritsar. Bhai Sahlo was one of the Commissioners of Settlement and one important quarter of Amritsar is still called after him.

4. The remission of one whole year's tax by Akbar, at the request of Guru Ram Das, had made the Sikh cause very popular with the peasantry of the Punjab. In the north of the Chenab, however, the peasantry was almost wholly Muhammadan, and between the Chenab and the Ravi it was nearly equally divided between the Hindus and Muhammadans, but the official influence owing to the proximity of Lahore was very great between the two rivers. Thc Gurus, therefore, turned their attention to the Bari Doab[1]

---

1. The country lying between the rivers Ravi and Beas.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

where the peasantry was almost entirely Hindu as it is to the present day, and perhaps also because that part of the Punjab was most familiar to the Gurus themselves, and being entirely rural[1] was more free from the direct control and supervision of the Muhammadan authorities. The foundation of the City of Amritsar and its conversion into a base of operations by Guru Arjun had considerably contributed to the propagation of Sikhism among the Jats of Majha, and now the Guru, as it were, carried the new faith and new ideas to their very doors by establishing an important centre in the heart of the population. The town of Tarn Taran was founded and a large tank laid out.[2] Tarn Taran is the capital of the tract of country known as the Majha or middle land, which extends from the Ravi to the Beas, the nursery of the chivalry of the Native Army, and the home of a sturdy and strong race of agriculturists."[3] It was the

---

1. All the important towns in the Majha tract like Amritsar, Atari, Taran Taran, Jandiala, Ajnala, Ram Das, Majeetha, Raja Sansi were either founded by the Gurus, or by others about or after their time. See *Gazetteer of the Amritsar District.*

2. This tank gives its name to the town which means "aiding to swim across," or "Salvation" or "cleansing" water, and the popular belief among the Sikhs is that its water possesses the virtue of curing leprosy, which is responsible for the large colony of lepers there.

3. *Gazetteer of the Amritsar District* (1883-84).

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

light that radiated from Amritsar and Taran Taran that made the peasantry realise their strength, and transformed them from peaceful and toiling husbandmen into fiery soldiers and rulers of the soil which their ancestors had ploughed a few generations before them.

5. The division of the area permeated by Sikhism into 22 provinces by Amar Das, the law of hereditary succession introduced by Ram Das, the foundation of Amritsar which became the chief centre of Sikh activity and became a sort of Sikh Capital, and the compilation of the Granth, which served as a code of sacred as well as secular law, had introduced into the constitution of the Sikh community some preliminary elements of an infant theocratical state with the Guru as the true King. Arjun now introduced a further and much more important measure of political organisation by placing the revenue system on a sounder and less precarious basis. Hitherto-fore the revenues of the Church depended upon the voluntary contributions of the congregation. The number of the Sikhs had immensely increased and as they were scattered over all parts of the Punjab, from Peshawar to Delhi, the collection of these gifts was very difficult and very often they did not find their way into the treasury of the Gurus. Arjun overcame this difficulty in two ways :

(*a*) In the first place the amount of these gifts was fixed with the consent of

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the donors, so that the Guru could now arrange his budget with much more certainty as the dues of the Gurus were paid more readily and unfailingly than even the Moghul revenues.

(*b*) Secondly, the difficulty as regards the collection was removed by the appointment of *Masands* or collectors in each of the twenty-two provinces of Sikhism. The duty of each Collector[1] was to realise the Guru's dues and take them to the Guru at Amritsar on the Baisakhi day when the great Durbar was held by the Guru and was attended by all pious and well-to-do Sikhs.

---

1. These collectors were at first chosen for their piety, integrity and high position, and were, probably, honorary officers. The office, however, soon became hereditary in the families of the first incumbents, and gradually falling into unworthy hands became an instrument of jobbery and oppression. The complaints against the Masands became so loud at last that Guru Gobind Singh had to abolish their office altogether. There are, therefore, now no Sikh Masands, although the system still continues in the sect founded by Banda, and the Masands exist under the name of Bhais. (*Life of Banda* Khalsa Diwan). Masand seems to be a corruption of Masnad, shorter form of *Masnad-i-Ali* or His Excellency, the title of Moghul Governors. This is another proof of the rising power of the Sikhs. When the Guru became the true King, his Viceroys must of course be Their Excellencies.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

6. The next step taken by Guru Arjun was calculated to encourage adventure and enterprise among his followers. With this object in view he sent numbers of his followers to Turkistan to purchase horses there and sell them in India.

This step though apparently most ordinary[1] was productive of manifold good to the rising power of Sikh theocracy.

(*a*) First, it dealt another effective blow at the stringency of caste and Hindu superstitions, in breaking down the barrier which prevented the Hindus from crossing the Indus. It also tested and strengthened the faith of the Sikhs, for it required a staunch belief and strong character to come out unscathed through a fanatical

---

9. In course of conversation with an educated Sikh on the point I hinted at the political motive which the Guru probably had, in starting this horse trade. He felt surprised, for like many Sikhs, he had never thought Guru Arjun had any political motives at all in anything that he undertook and accomplished. Considering, however, that Arjun was the first great organiser among the Sikh Gurus and was, in fact, the founder of Sikh Theocracy, it would be too poor an estimate of his intelligence to suppose that he never cherished a belief in the great possibilities of the little State he had built up. As regards the horse trade beyond the Indus, the very fact that nearly all historians have mentioned it would show its importance and that the Guru had an aim in fostering it.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

and aggressive population like the Muhammadans of the trans-Indus territories.

(*b*) Horse trade, being a lucrative trade in those days, enriched the Sikh traders and brought large contributions to the coffers of the Church.[1]

(c) It laid the foundation of the future armies of the Khalsa, by developing a taste for riding among the Sikhs, who gradually became the finest horsemen in Northern India.[2]

7. The character of Gurushíp had already been changed by the adoption of the rule of hereditary succession. Now that the number of followers multiplied, the resources increased, and the Church was developed into a sort of State, Guru Arjun changed his mode of living so as to suit the present condition of

---

1. The *Daswandh* or the one-tenth of the profit, which was set apart by every pious Sikh for the communal funds, would of itself be a valuable addition, but it is likely that the trade, or at any rate a considerable part of it, was carried on with public funds of the community, and the major portion of the profits, therefore, went to the funds of the Church.

2. The Sikh forces were entirely composed of cavalry before Ranjit Singh's time.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the community over which he presided.[1]

All his predecessors, from Nanak to Ram Das, had lived in great simplicity and even asceticism but Arjun completely changed the nature of the Guru's office Though himself a man of simple habits and great humility[2] his *durbar* became a place of splendour and magnificence, and the palatial buildings and tents and horses and treasure gave it the look of a princely Court.

As a matter of fact the Sikhs had made a great advance under the pontificate of Guru Arjun A state, peaceful and unobtrusive, had been slowly evolved, and with the Guru at its head as *Sachcha Padshah*, the Sikhs "had already become accustomed to a form of self-government within the empire."[3] Their

---

1. The author of the *Panth Prakash* relates a popular tradition about the wealthiness of Guru Arjun. It is said that the power and pelf of the world kept, as it were, at a distance of twelve miles from Nanak and six miles from Angad. It knocked at the door of Amar Das and fell at the feet of Guru Ram Das, while in Arjun's time it got admission into the house. The fable very beautifully describes the gradual growth of the social and political power of the Sikhs.

2. Arjun had a very long beard. When he went to see Sri Chand, Nanak's ascetic son who was still alive and nearly 100 years old, he was asked by the old ascetic why he had grown such a long beard. "To wipe the feet of saints like your Holiness," replied Arjun. "It was this humility," rejoined Sri Chand, "that won you the throne of Guru Nanak".

3. Muhsin Fani, Dabistan.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

power and prestige had increased, and they were fast becoming a factor in the political life of the province Reference may here be made to two circumstances which furnish an index to the position to which the Sikhs had attained under the regime of Arjun.

The first is this. When Prince Khusro, who had rebelled against his father, fled to the Punjab[1] and took refuge there, he resorted to the Guru for help. The Guru had not yet initiated a policy of military organisation, but he advanced a considerable sum of money to the Prince, and lent him his moral support by praying for his success in the civil war The other fact showing the Guru's political importance is that his son was chosen for the hand of the beautiful daughter of Chandu Shah, the Diwan of Lahore.

Both of these circumstances are extremely important in the history of the Sikhs, as the complications arising out of them directly and indirectly contributed to the growth of Sikh power and led to the first step in their military organisation.

---

1. In 1606, A. D.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER V

Persecution drives the Sikhs to Arms

The next great impetus which stimulated the growth of the Sikh power and proved the immediate cause of its transition into a political organisation was that received from the persecution to which they were systematically subjected by the Moslem Government of the day. The history of these persecutions is the history of all the measures which a despotic Government is compelled to adopt to check the growth of a dangerous organisation. Threats, prosecution, fine, imprisonment, deportation, torture, execution, outlawry, and massacre, all these weapons were employed one by one, against the builders of the nation which was destined to wrest the sceptre of the Punjab from the hands of the Moghuls. The followers of the Gurus faced every hardship with fortitude and courage, and emerged from every ordeal purer and stronger, with redoubled zeal and deeper vows of implacable hatred against the rulers. They acted on the faith that "Blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church," and proved its truth by their ultimate success. Not only did they succeed in founding a Church which claims the allegiance of the majority of Hindus in the Punjab,

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

but established a Kingdom which gave a magnificent sunset to the stormy day of Hindu glory.

FIRST PROSECUTION

The chapter of these persecutions opened in the life-time of Arjun himself. He was not only to be the first great organiser of the Sikh nation, but was also destined to be the first to receive the crown of martyrdom. Organisation of any kind is in itself a menace to despotism, and the compactness which the rising community of the Sikhs was assuming under Arjun would of itself have brought the royal wrath upon the Guru's head. But the catastrophe was precipitated by two circumstances, one of which, at least, was purely accidental. The Guru had made the mistake of openly espousing the cause of the rebel Prince Khusro, and as stated in the previous chapter, had helped him by placing a sum of money at his disposal. The other was the rejection[1] by the Guru of the offer

1. *The Purohit* of the Diwan who had been entrusted with the duty of finding a husband for the minister's daughter was tempted by the power and prosperity of Arjun no less than by the personal merits of his son, and had consequently selected the Guru's son for the hand of the Diwan's daughter. Great as Arjun was, his income consisted of tithes, and Chandu made on this ground an uncomplimentary remark about the Guru, in which he compared himself to the highest storey of a palace and the Guru to the gutter. The Guru was indignant to hear of this remark, and though his obstinacy cost him his life, his self-respect did not allow him to accept the offer.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

made by Chandoo Shah, Diwan of Lahore, of his daughter's hand to the son of the Guru. This was an insult which the great Minister of Lahore could not swallow. He repeated the offer again and again, but it was again and again rejected.[1] The Diwan was exasperated and resolved to punish the Guru for his insolence. With this object in view he reported to the Emperor that the *Adi Granth* compiled by Guru Arjun was seditious in tone and full of malicious attacks on Islam as well as Hinduism. An examination of the contents, however, fully satisfied the tolerant Akbar, as to its devotional and inoffensive character.

Whether Chandu was able to do any harm to Guru Arjun or not, the Guru's fate was sealed when Jahangir ascended the throne. The tortures inflicted on him and his death as the result of those tortures were directly due to the bigotry of Jahangir. This is fully borne out by the Emperor's own Autobiography. In a passage which gained wide publicity for the first time in 1941[2] Jahangir says :

"At Govindwal situated on the River Beas there lived a Hindu named Arjun in the garb

---

1. The offer was made so repeatedly because, under a mistaken notion of honour, a noble Khatri could not brook to marry his daughter to anyone else after a match for her had been once selected.

2. Sher-i-Punjab, Urdu Weekly of Lahore, dated 31-5-1941.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

of saints and holymen. He had attracted many Hindus and even some ignorant and low class Mussalmans and had ensnared them to follow the practices of his cult. He had been loudly blowing the trumpet of his saintliness and spiritual leadership. He was known as 'Guru' and people from all sides resorted to him and made declarations of faith in him. This 'shop' of his had been running briskly since three or four generations. I had been wishing for a long time either to abolish this emporium of falsehood or convert him to Islam till Khusru happened to pass this way. The foolish Prince thought of attaching himself to his cortege. He repaired to the Guru's residence and had an interview with him. The Guru discussed some old cases with him and with his finger put on the forehead of the Prince a saffron mark which is called '*tilak*' by the Hindus and is considered an auspicious omen. This incident was reported to me. I was already fully aware of the Guru's false cult. I ordered him to be arrested and made over his household and family to Murtaza Khan. I confiscated all his property and issued orders that he should be imprisoned, tortured and executed."[1] In the same passage he refers to the punishment which he inflicted on others who had shown their sympathy with Khusru during the few days he was round about Lahore.

---

1. Tozak Jehangiri, page 35, Nawal Kishore Press, Lucknow.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

In all likelihood the part that Chandu could have played in this tragic episode was that as Dewan of the Lahore Government he made a report to the Central Government in his official capacity about the incident mentioned by the Emperor.

The Guru was put to death in 1606 A.D. after the most barbarous tortures.

DEPORTATION

The next victim of imperial wrath was Arjun's own son Hargovind. He was an excellent sportsman and by his charming manners and manly bearing had won the regard of Jahangir who took him to Kashmir in 1620. He, however, soon incurred the Emperor's displeasure, first, by his over-independent character, secondly, by breaking the forest laws to which he was led by his great passion for hunting, and thirdly, by appropriating[1] to his own use the money granted by the Emperor for his troops. Besides this the fine imposed upon his father had never been paid. The result was that Hargovind was arrested and deported[2] to

---

1. The emperor could not understand the nature of the Guru's following. His troops were mostly volunteers and fought not for pay, but out of devotion and obedience.

2. *Panth Prakash* gives another version also. It is stated that afraid of the rising power of Hargovind, Chandu Shah instigated the Emperor to

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Gwalior. There he was confined on short rations in the fort for many years until he was released at the intercession of Mianmeer, the famous Muhammadan Saint, after whom the town of the Lahore Cantonment is named.

EXECUTION

Prosecution, fine, imprisonment, and deportation had been tried and had proved successful for some time. But the ninth Guru seems to have recouped the lost power, and the Khalsa was again ripe for persecution. Tegh Bahadur was the acknowledged head of the Punjab Hindus from 1664 to 1675 A.D. His personal influence and popular propaganda formed a great obstacle in the way of Aurangzeb's proselytising campaign. He was consequently summoned to Delhi in 1675 on a charge of treason and two alternatives were placed before him. He should either embrace Islam or die. He preferred death to apostasy and was beheaded by Aurangzeb's orders. His

---

send Hargovind to the fort of Gwalior to offer prayers for His Majesty to avert an impending calamity which astrologers, bribed by Chandu, had predicted for the Emperor.

Sikhande Rajdi Vithya as well as *Khargdhari Hulas* by Jodh Singh follows the latter version. They also put Chandu's execution after the Guru's release. The Guru's captivity according to these authorities extended over one year only, but according to *Dabistan* of Muhsin Fani it lasted for twelve years. Trumpp follows *Dabistan*, and I think, is correct.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

body was exposed in the streets of Delhi where it lay for many days until it was removed by some brave low class followers of the martyred Guru and carried to his son who performed the funeral rites.[1]

SLAUGHTER OF INNOCENTS

The edge of Moghul vengeance grew sharper every day with the increase of the power of the Khalsa. During the siege of Anandpur where Guru Govind Singh was shut up by the Moghul army, the Guru's mother with her two little grandsons[2] escaped from the fortress at the request of the Guru himself. They had not gone far when they fell into the hands of the Governor of Sirhind.[3] The

---

1. According to *Panth Prakash* the head was taken by one Jiwan, a scavenger, to Guru Govind Singh, while the body was removed at night by Lakhi, a Sikh of the Labana caste and cremated secretly by him in his own house. The place of execution is marked by a temple named *Sees Ganj* and the place of cremation by a Cenotaph called *Rikal Ganj* after the village of the faithful Labana. According to another version the head was burnt at Delhi while the body was removed by two sweepers, father and son. In order to avoid suspicion and pursuit, the father insisted on being beheaded and his body being substituted in place of the Guru's which was accordingly done. See Mushi Sohan Lal, p. 72.

2. The names of the boys were Fateh Singh and Zorawar Singh.

3. Foujdar Khan is the name given by some, but it is really mistaking the title for the name. The name of then Foujdar (Governor) of Sirhind was Wazir Khan. (see Malcolm and Cunningham)

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

slaughter of women and minors, even if infidels, is not allowed in the Koran. Their lives were, therefore, spared and the children often attended the court of the Governor as State prisoners. One day as the boys were sitting in the Court, the Governor was much pleased with their graceful appearance and seemingly good looks, and said to them with kindness: "Boys, what would you do if we were to give you your liberty?" The boys answered: "We would collect our Sikhs, supply them with implements of war, fight with you and put you to death." The Governor said: "If you were defeated in the fight, what would you do then?" "We will collect our armies again," replied the boys," and will either kill you or be killed." The Governor was enraged at their intrepid and haughty reply, and ordered his Diwan to remove the boys from his presence, and to despatch them at his house. The boys were accordingly put to death by Kuljas, the Diwan. Some[1] say he put the children under the foundation of a wall and closed the place up and thus buried them alive. The Gurus mother died of grief at the sad end of her grand children.[2]

---

1. *Panth Prakash*, for instance.

2. The account given above is according to Syed Muhammad Latif, *History of the Punjab*, page 265.

N. B.—In *Panth Prakash* and Kanahya Lal's *History of Punjab* it is stated that the Guru's mother

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

MASSACRE

Horrible as the treatment accorded by the Governor of Sirhind to the infant sons of Govind was, it was to be succeeded by horrors of much more appalling dimensions. Guru Govind was dead, and his mantle had fallen on the shoulders of Banda. This leader had taken full vengeance upon the Governor and people of Sirhind for the atrocious cruelty with which they had dealt with the innocent children of the Guru. He had slaughtered hundreds of Muhammadans, burnt down scores of villages and for a moment seemed to have shaken the very foundations of the Moghul Empire.[1] He was at last defeated in 1716 and taken to Delhi in an iron cage with 740 of his followers preceded by a procession of Sikhs' heads borne on

---

and sons were betrayed by an old servant, named Ganga Ram, according to P P. Malcolm makes no mention of this betrayal, but simply says: "His enemies entered the fortress which the Guru had left, the moment he fled, and many prisoners were taken, among whom were his mother and his two children, who were carried to Foujdar (Wazir) Khan, the Governor of Sirhind, by whose orders they were inhumanly massacred." Malcolm's *Sketch* (page 40). A footnote on the same page is very significant, "Muhammadan writers" it says, "blame Wazir Khan for this unnecessary and unpolitic act of barbarity."

1. It is said that the successes of Banda had led Bahadur Shah to seriously think of shifting his capital from Delhi to Lahore.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

pikes.[1] "A hundred Sikhs were put to death daily, contending among themselves for priority of martyrdom, and on the eighth day Banda himself was arraigned before his judges. He was made to kill his own son which he did, silent and unmoved. He probably thought that death was better for the child than to be left in the hands of the Moghul fanatics who if they spared his life might have deprived him of his *dharma.*"[2]

"His own flesh was torn with a red hot pincer and amid these torments he expired."

OUTLAWRY

After the defeat of Banda, the power of the Sikhs was almost shattered to pieces and it seemed that the race was going to be extinct.

Farrukh Siyar had ascended the throne of Delhi in 1714 A.D. He was a powerful ruler, and as soon as he had cleared the Court of rivals and hostile factions, he turned his attention to set things right in the Punjab. Banda had fallen but he knew the elasticity of the Sikh character and the readiness with which the followers of

---

1. Khafi Khan.

2. Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs.* Also see the British Envoy's letter (March 10, 1716) from Delhi. Wheeler's *Early Records of British India,* page 180.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Govind mustered together as soon as they could find a leader. He, therefore, issued a proclamation which declared all Sikhs to be outlaws, and laid down that :—

(1) No Hindu in the Punjab was allowed to grow long hair or a beard, any one refusing to shave being liable to instant death[1]

(2) A scale of prizes was fixed for co-operation in the extermination of the Sikhs. Anyone giving information leading to the arrest of a Sikh was eligible for a reward of Rs. 5, a helper in the arrest was given Rs. 10, one bringing a Sikh to a Police station received Rs. 15, and anyone who brought the head of a Sikh was awarded Rs.. 25. For greater services jagirs were bestowed upon deserving persons.

(3) It was made criminal for anyone to entertain a Sikh, give him refuge under his roof or help him in any way.[2]

The temple of the Sikhs at Amritsar was desecrated and a Muhammadan Taluqdar[3]

---

1. Malcolm : *A Sketch of the Sikhs*, page 53. See also Forster, *Journey from Bengal, etc.*, page 265.

2. *Panth Prakash.* See also Malcolm : *Sketch* (page 53.)

3. *Massa Ranghar* who was assassinated by Mahtab Singh of Mirankot and Sukha Singh, Carpenter of Mari Kambo, in 1740 A. D.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

of Lahore held his *nautch* parties within its sacred precincts. Moreover a moving column of several thousand soldiers was appointed to hunt out the Sikhs wherever they could be found.[1] The result of these measures was that numbers of less enthusiastic Sikhs shaved their beards, and passed as ordinary Hindus again, while the more faithful retired to the jungles and hills or, bidding for the nonce good-bye to their native land, sought refuge in the deserts of Bikanir and Rajputana, some taking service with the Hindu chiefs of those provinces. This was the hardest time, the bitterst ordeal, for the followers of Govind. Driven from their hearths and homes, they wandered they knew not whither, without a shelter, without any food or clothing. Their wives and children were seized and tortured to death. The tradition is still fresh in the Punjab how a mother then used to answer the question, "How many sons have you got?" "I had four," the mother said "but one has become a Sikh." To be a Sikh was to court certain death. "An astonishing number of that sect must have fallen, in the last two or three years of the contest with the imperial armies, as the irritated Muhammadans gave them no quarter."[2]

---

1. The strength of this column sometimes reached ten thousand. It was appointed in Muhammad Shah's time by Zakria Khan, the newly appointed Governor, by the advice of his Hindu Diwan named Lakhpat Rai. (*Guru Panth Prakash*).

2. Malcolm : *Sketch* (page 53.)

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER VI

Some Notable Executions

Thousands of faithful Sikhs must have fallen during the maelstrom, but two or three executions, which owing to the peculiar and high position and great piety of the victims aroused the greatest indignation, deserve a particular mention.

MARTYRDOM OF MANI SINGH

The foremost of these victims was Mani Singh. He was an old Sikh who had sat at the feet of Guru Govind Singh himself. He had been sent to Amritsar by the widow of the Guru to settle the disputes raging between the followers of Banda and the *Tatwa Khalsa* or the original and staunch followers of Govind. He was a well-read man and the *Adi Granth* owes its present form to his labour and skill. Being of a retiring and peaceful disposition he had settled down in Amritsar and while the storm of persecution was raging all around, he passed his days in Amritsar as a pious Hindu whom no one suspected or reported as having anything to do with the rebellious Sikhs. He looked after the temple and in 1738 A. D.,

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

two years before its desecration,[1] Mani Singh who was held in great esteem by the Hakim of Amritsar applied for leave to hold the Diwali fair in Amritsar. The matter, being rather serious, was referred to the Governor of Lahore. Permission was ultimately granted on the condition that Mani Singh should pay Rs. 5,000 into the State treasury after the fair.[2] Mani Singh issued invitations to the whole body of Khalsa and the Sikhs started towards Amritsar in large numbers. The Governor of Lahore, however, sent a detachment of troops to Amritsar under the pretext of keeping order during the coming fair. The Sikhs were frightened by this suspicious move of the authorities and turned back. The fair was never held and the sum of Rs. 5,000 which Mani Singh expected to pay out of the offerings that the Sikhs would have made at the temple was not paid. Mani Singh was arrested and taken to Lahore. He was asked to pay the money or embrace Islam. The latter proposal was rejected with scorn. The

---

1. By Massa Ranghar who turned the temple into his sitting room and defiled it by smoking and spitting in it and inviting nautch girls to dance there.

2. Mani Singh's object might have been to bring about peaceful relations between the Sikhs and the Government and to give them an opportunity of settling their future policy by bringing them together. The object of the Governor in granting permission was probably to allow the Sikhs to assemble at one point and then to strike a crushing blow at them unawares, as is clearly shown by subsequent proceedings.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

admirers of Mani Singh raised the 5,000 rupees but it was too late. The sentence of death had already been passed and Mani Singh was consequently put to death, his body being slowly cut to pieces at each joint.[1]

MARTYRDOM OF TARU SINGH (1750 A. D.)

The next important victim of Moslem bigotry was Taru Singh. He was a Jat by caste and a native of Poola in the Manjha tract. He was a young man of twenty-five, and lived with his sister and widowed mother, earning his livelihood by tilling the bit of land his father had left him. He had great reputation for piety and was a devoted follower of the Khalsa. He was always heard repeating the verses of the Granth whether engaged in ploughing his field or watering his crops. His mother and sister also were models of virtue and piety and made their living by grinding their neighbours' corn. The family lived a simple and austere life and spent all their

---

1. It is stated by the author of *Panth Prakash* that Mani Singh altered the arrangement of the *Adi Granth*, re-arranging the works of the various authors according to the Rags. The Sikhs who looked upon the book as a living personality resented Mani Singh's action as mutilation of their Guru and declared that his own body would be cut into pieces just as he had cut the body of the sacred book into pieces. It is of course needless to say whether the curse led to the punishment or the punishment led to the invention of the curse.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

little savings in the help of their brethren whom the iron hand of the Nazim of Lahore had driven into forests and deserts. This was considered treason and it was not long before Taru Singh was betrayed by one Har Bhagat Niranjani of Jandiala.[1] The offender was arrested and taken to Lahore. On the way some Sikhs offered to rescue him but Taru Singh did not like to expose his friends to the vengeance of the authorities, and preferred to go to Lahore. He was put on the wheel, and when his limbs were crushed and he was half dead the alternative of Islam was placed before him and promises of material advancement were held forth. "But all this did not avail to him as a grain of barley."[2] When asked to cut his hair he simply said "The hair, the scalp and the skull have a mutual connection; the head of man is linked with life, and I am prepared to lay down my life with cheerfulness."[3] His hair was then hewn off from his skull and he was put to death after severe tortures. About the same time a large number of other Sikhs were brought to Lahore and slain outside the Delhi Gate, and the

---

1. This must have been a follower of Akil Das, Mahant or Abbot of Jandiala who sided with the Abdali King, and was ultimately destroyed by the Sikhs.

2. *Ibrat Nama*—Persian Ms. India Office, No. 504, Ethe's Catalogue, p, 199.

3. Cunningham—*History of the Sikhs*, p. 92.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

scene of their execution is now known as Shahid Ganj or place of martyrs. This place was often used for the execution of Sikhs during Muslim rule as referred to elsewhere also in this book.

SHAHID GANJ.

This place has been a bone of contention between the Sikhs and the Muslims for about a century. It came into great prominence a few years ago. The History of the place is as follows :—

This Masjid was dedicated by one Falak Beg Khan in 1134 A. H. or 1722 A. D. and Sheikh Din Mohammad and his descendants were appointed *Matwalis*. The area of this property was 3 Kanals and 15 Marlas including a school, a well and an orchard.

In 1762 A. D. the building together with the courtyard, well and adjacent land passed into the hands of the Sikhs when the Bhangi Sardars occupied Lahore. Since then it has always been in possession of the Sikhs, until about fifty years ago a part of the building was used for the worship of the Guru Granth Sahib ; other parts have been used for secular purposes being let out to tenants or for storing chaff (Bhussa) or holding rubbish.

The land adjacent to the building was regarded by the Sikhs as a place of martyrdom (Shahid ganj) it being commonly held among

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

them that Bhai Taru Singh had on this spot suffered martyrdom at the hands of Muslim rulers and that many others including women and children were executed there. The High Court held (*vide* A.I.R., Lahore 1938 page 369 and its Judgment was upheld by the Privy Council) that "This mosque has not been used as a place of worship by Muslims since it came into Sikh possession and control", and that "there has been a complete denial to Muslims of all their rights."

In 1849 at the time of the annexation of the Punjab by the British this property was in the possession of certain Sikh Mahants of the Gurdwara. In 1850 a criminal case was brought by one Nur Mohammad claiming to be *Malwali* of this place who also moved the Settlement Department in 1853 but all the proceedings came to nothing as he had been long out of possession.

Then a civil suit was brought out. It was also dismissed in 1853. On the 25th of June 1855 yet another suit was brought by the same person and it was dismissed and the order of dismissal was upheld by the Appellate Courts as well.

In 1925 the Sikh Gurdwara Act (Punjab Act VIII of 1925) was passed. Under this Act a Notification was issued by the Government dated 22nd December 1927 declaring Shahidganj Bhai Taru Singh as belonging to the Sikh Gurdwara. A claim was brought before

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the Sikh Gurdwara Tribunal on 16th March 1923 but the claim was dismissed and no appeal was filed against this order of dismissal. On 7th of July 1935 the building was suddenly demolished by or with the connivance of its Sikh custodians. Riots and disorders ensued in which the Military had to be called out, firing was resorted to and many Mussalmans who had apparently assembled to take possession of the place by assault were shot dead on the spot. The situation became so serious that the then Governor of the Punjab (Sir Herbert Emerson) had to come down from Simla with all his Ministers. Conferences and consultations were held for many days and all the available members of the Punjab Legislative Council were called together and every effort was made to bring about a compromise between the Muslims and the Sikhs but all negotiations failed. An attempt was made by some Muslim members of the Council to move a Bill in the Council for the restoration of the alleged mosque to the Muslim but the Punjab Government under the leadership of Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan turned down the motion.

Having failed in every way a civil suit was filed on 30th October 1935 in the Court of the District Judge, Lahore, against the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee and the Committee of Management for the notified Sikh Gurdwaras at Lahore—the authorities which were in possession of the

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

disputed property as being property belonging to the Gurdwara. The relief claimed was a declaration that the building was a mosque in which the plaintiffs and all followers of Islam had a right to worship, an injunction restraining any improper use of the building and any interference with the Plaintiff's right of worship and a mandatory injunction to reconstruct the buildings. The suit was dismissed on the 25th of May 1936 and an appeal to the High Court was dismissed on 26th January 1938 by a full bench presided over by Chief Justice Young. The Muslims' appeal was also dismissed by the Privy Council. For fuller facts reference may be made to I. L. R., 21, Lahore, p. 493 P. C.

There now the matter rests. The Mussalmans have not given up their claim and they will, on the first occasion when they are able to do so, make another effort to take possession of the property whether by a legislative measure which a weak government may allow to be passed or when British influence is either weakened or the Muslim attempt is connived at, by a *coup de main*.

THE BOY MARTYR, HAKIKAT RAI.

The execution of Mani Singh, Taru Singh and other holy men stirred the Sikh nation to its very depths, but the Moghul Government had in these cases at least the semblance of law on their side and these holy men had fallen under charges of high treason.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

The execution of Hakikat Rai, however, was due to sheer bigotry and high-handedness, and the result of it was far more disastrous for the Government than any produced by previous persecution. So far the ordinary Hindus, though greatly oppressed, were not so hostile to the Moghuls as the Sikhs were, but the slaughter of this innocent little boy roused their bitterest hatred and goaded them to make common cause with the Sikhs. The martyrdom of Hakikat won him the title of *Dharmi*, or Hakikat the Faithful, by which name he is still remembered and his memory still cherished.

As none of the English historians has made any mention of the incident which exerted such a powerful influence on the Hindus of the eighteenth century in the Punjab, and still appeals to them with a great force, it may not be quite out of place to give here a brief account of the event.

Hakikat Rai was probably born in 1719 A. D.[1] at Sialkot, being the only child of

---

1. The date of Hakikat's birth as given by Lala Mulk Raj Bhalla, author of *Shahid Ganj* or Hindu Martyrology, is 1745 A.D. and that given in *Shamshir-i-Khalsa* is 1734. I think both are wrong. Agra who wrote a *War* of Hakikat Rai gives 1791 Samvat as the date of Hakikat's martyrdom. As Agra wrote this book in 1847 Samvat, i.e., about 56 years after the tragedy he might have been an eye-witness, of the incident. Munshi Sohan Lal, the famous Court Historian of Ranjit Singh,

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Bagh Mal, a Khatri of the *puri* caste and a clerk in the office of the *Hakim* of Sialkot. Hakikat was married at an early age to the daughter of a Sikh Khatri of Wadala, a well-known village in the district of Sialkot, and it may be presumed that he had heard something of the glorious sacrifices and martyrdom of the Gurus and their followers. He was sent to school at the age of seven and began to learn Persian with a *Mulla* or a Muhammadan priest. It was in the year 1734 when Hakikat was barely fifteen that one day a quarrel arose among the boys in the absence of the Mulla. The Muhammadan boys took the aggressive part and abused a goddess of the Hindus. Hakikat seems to have been a devout follower of the goddess, and, touched to the quick, he retaliated by abusing Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet Muhammad. This was an offence which no Hindu had dared to commit and this cost poor Hakikat his life. When the Mulla returned, a complaint was made to him by the Moslem boys. The Mulla flew into rage, caught hold of Hakikat and asked him how he dared to abuse the Prophet's daughter.

---

puts the occurrence in the time of Khan Bahadur who was Governor of Lahore from 1726 to 1743. A. D. Kali Das, the well-known poet of Gujranwala, also assigns the age of Muhammad Shah and Khan Bahadur to the martyrdom of Hakikat.

Agra also gives the morning of the twelfth of the dark half moon of Kartik as the time of Hakikat's birth, though he does not give the year.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Hakikat admitted his guilt, but declared that he had not been aggressive, and had lost his temper by the Moslem boys' heaping abuse on her who was adored by all holy men and to whose holy shrine Akbar, the great Emperor, had walked barefooted to pay his homage.[1] This intrepid reply exasperated the Mulla and he dragged the boy to the Court of the Qazi who took him at once to the *Hakim*. The news of Hakikat's arrest fell like a thunderbolt upon his parents. They hastened to the *Hakim* and on their knees begged him to pardon their son as he was only a child and had uttered the sinful words in a boyish quarrel. The Mulla and the Qazi seemed to have decided upon putting the boy to death unless he embraced Islam, and to preclude all possibility of mercy being shown to the culprit they had already worked up a sensation in the Moslem population of the town. Amir Beg, the *Hakim*, seems to have been a more sensible and less bigoted man. He realised the gravity of the situation and did not like to take the responsibility on his own shoulders. He called a meeting of the *Ulemas* and referred the matter to them. The verdict of the Ulemas was that Hakikat should either embrance Islam or he should expiate the sin

---

1. The statement seems to be true and the incident is still celebrated in popular verse which says: "O goddess, Akbar came barefooted and offered a golden canopy at thy shrine. *Nangin nangin parin devi Akbar aya te sone da chhatar charhaya.*

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

by his death. Amir Beg did not approve of this decision and pointed out many serious political results that would follow such high-handedness. The Ulemas appealed to his Islamic piety and urged him to lay aside all mundane considerations in punishing the offender who had dared insult Islam. Amir Beg was on the horns of a dilemma. Justice and commonsense revolted against such cruelty. The Ulemas and the crowd of Moslem fanatics that had by this time surrounded his Court would not listen to justice and commonsense. The only way out of the difficulty seemed to lie in sending up the case to the higher authorities. Hakikat with the Qazi and the Mulla was sent up to the Nazim of Lahore. All along the way from Sialkot to Lahore crowds came out from every village to meet the unfortunate boy and plead for him. Many fair-minded Muhammadans[1] also implored the Qazi to pardon the little offender but all was in vain. The decision of the Nazim of Lahore was in accordance with the verdict of the Ulemas. The Governor was, however, moved to pity at the tender years and attractive features of Hakikat, and exhorted him to embrace Islam and promised him high rank and all worldly things if he renounced his faith. Hakikat was firm and was prepared to die. Kauran, his aged mother, ran to him and entreated him to embrace

---

1. Notable among these was Dargahi, the Mukaddim of Shahdara, near Lahore.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Islam and save his life. "Shall I not die again, mother?" was Hakikat's reply. "If die I must in every case, why die a renegade?" The bereavement of the parents, the widowhood of his girl-wife, the sorrow of all friends and relations were difficult to bear, but the abandonment of his dharma seemed to Hakikat much more difficult. The order was passed and the noble boy was at once beheaded, in the centre of the city of Lahore, amidst the sighs and curses of the whole Hindu population. His funeral was attended by the high and the low and his ashes were buried four miles east of Lahore, where a cenotaph still exists and a fair is annually held on the day of Basant Panchami, the day of his martyrdom.[1]

---

9. The history of Hakikat's martyrdom has gained great popularity with the Punjab Hindus within the last few years. The greatest work of Kali Das, the greatest living poet of the Punjab, is devoted to this subject. The little drama of L. Mulk Raj Bhalla has also played a great part in reviving the story of the boy martyr.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER VII

Armed Resistance Begins

HARGOVIND'S COMPAIGNS (1607-1644)

The prosecution, fine, torture and death which Arjun, the fifth Guru, suffered were signal blasts, as it were, to rally the physical forces of the Sikh Theocracy. Hargovind, his son, who succeeded him at the age of eleven began by girding up two swords, "one to revenge my father, the other to destroy the miracles of Muhammad."[1] To the symbols of asceticism[2] were added the paraphernalia of royalty; the sword, the umbrella, the crest and the hawk. The presents which were now pouring in from all sides took the form of horses, arms and other equipment of war. The favourite occupation of the Guru was no longer sitting down in meditation and writing hymns and prayers.[3] Hargovind began to devote most of his time to wrestling, riding, tent-pegging and hunting the tiger and the boar. With the change of aims the occupation

---

1. Malcolm, *Sketch of the Sikhs.*

2. These were a cap, a rosary and a *sehli* or a necklace made of wood.

3. The sixth Guru has not left a single line of his composition.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

changed and with the change in the occupation came a change in tastes and even diet. Animal food was not only sanctioned but was encouraged.[1] Physical strength and athletic constitution found as much favour with the warlike pontiff as the highest piety or the deepest learning. "The general disposition of the martial apostle led him to rejoice in the companionship of a camp, in the danger of war and in the excitement of the chase, nor is it improbable that the policy of a temporal chief mingled with the feelings of an injured son and with the duties of a religious guide, so as to shape his acts to the ends of his ambition although that may not have aimed at more than a partial independence under the mild supremacy of the son of Akbar."[2]

The circumstances which led Hargovind to make military preparations and offer armed resistance to the Government may be summed up as follows :—

1. To revenge his father's death.

2. "To destroy the miracles of Muhammed," which meant the destruction of Islam and of the Moslem Government.[3]

---

1. *Dabistan.*

2. Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs.* p. 53.

3. This did not stand in the way of the Gurus' personal friendship with Muhammadans. Hargovind was on the most friendly terms with some of the

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

3. Natural disposition for adventure and romance as suggested by Cunningham.

4. A latent desire of seeing his people freed from the yoke of tyranny and oppression.

5. His own dangerous situation, as his cousin Dhir Mal whose father had been deprived of the *Gaddi* by the accession of Arjun was always plotting his ruin.

6. Certain subsidiary causes:—(a) his own incarceration, (b) his quarrel with his foster-brother Payenda Khan (c) alleged abduction of a Qazi's daughter, (d) the friction with the Emperor over a number of horses.

Goaded on by these circumstances the Guru at once addressed himself to the task of organising a little army of his own. The work was carried on as follows:—

1. He exhorted all his followers to bear arms and be always prepared to fight the enemies of their religion. These formed his reserves and came to fight under his flag whenever he summoned them.

---

leading Muhammadans of the time, Mushin Fani, the author of the *Dabistan*, being one of them. He had in fact been brought up by a Muhammadan nurse. Dara was the greatest friend of Har Rai and the Tenth Guru was partly educated and his very life was once saved by Muhammadans.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

2. He enlisted all malcontents and fugitives among his followers[1] and took many dacoits and free-booters into his service.

3. He had a stable of 800 horses, and 300 horsemen and sixty artillery men formed his bodyguard.[2]

For some time the Guru went on unmolested, and had in fact succeeded in winning the favour of Jahangir. Through the favour of the Emperor he had succeeded in taking his vengeance upon Chandu Shah, the Diwan of Lahore, who had been instrumental in the torture and death of his father.[3] He had even taken service under Jahangir and was

---

1. Cunningham. The Author of the *Panth Prakash* relates a tradition that Ram Pratap, the fugitive Raja of Jeysslmeer, had taken refuge with Hargovind and was so attached to him that when the Guru died, the Raja and his son Ram Singh jumped into the flames and burnt themselves on the funeral pyre of Hargovind, The author of *Panth Prakash* also mentions the names of Yar Khan and Khawja Sarai, dismissed Commanders of the Moghul army who took refuge with the Guru.

2. *Dabistan*, Cunningham wrongly translates *tahchi* and artillery man, into a match-lock man.

3, Dr. E. Trumpp says but wrongly I think that Hargovind had taken the law in his own hand and had succeeded in killing the Diwan without Royal help or permission. Chandu was dragged through the streets by a rope tied to his legs and after being subjected to great torture was put to death.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

sent to reduce the rebellious chief, Tara Chand of Nalagarh[1] whom he at once subdued and brought to the Emperor. He was then appointed a sort of supervisor over the Punjab officials and was placed in command of 700 horses, 1,000 foot and seven guns. The Guru retained this command until he incurred the Emperor's displeasure when he was dismissed and deported to the fort of Gwalior. After his release he passed many years in peace until he was driven to take up arms in self-defence.

Hargovind's military career extended over several years, during which he fought three battles, all of which he won.

1. The first was provoked by the governor of Lahore. A faithful Sikh was bringing some horses of exceptional breed from Turkistan for the Guru. The Nazim of Lahore took hold of the horses and kept them for the Emperor. The Emperor bestowed one upon Rustam Khan, the Qazi of Lahore. The Guru succeeded in recovering this one, and to flout the Qazi carried away his favourite concubine[2] as well. He was

---

1. *Panth Prakash* and *Dabistan.*

2. The Sikh accounts say she was the Qazi's daughter. Muhammadans, according to Cunningham, assert that she was a concubine, and the Hindu name of the girl, Kaulan (lotus) would confirm the Moslem view. The girl might have been a Hindu and might

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

consequently attacked by Mukhlis Khan, the Naib Nazim of Lahore, and the two sons of the Qazi with a force of 7,000 strong. The Guru met them at the head of 5,000 troops.[1] A battle was fought at Wadali, four miles from Amritsar, in which the Moghuls were completely routed.[2]

Two weeks after this defeat the Moghul army, 15,000 strong, again attacked the Guru at Amritsar. The Guru offered some resistance but thinking discretion to be the better part of valour withdrew to his hill retreats. One year after this when he was resting at Sri Hargovindpore, a town founded by himself, he was suddenly attacked by the troops of the Nazim of Jullundhur under Ali Bakhsh and Imam Bakhsh. The Guru opposed his 2,000 Sikhs to the 5,000 Moghuls and won a complete victory. The Nazim himself arrived soon after to retrieve the lost battle and was himself slain.

---

have been forcibly abducted by the Qazi, by no means an uncommon occurrence in those days. Thinking the Guru to be champion of the Hindus she might have escaped and taken refuge with him. He treated her kindly and immortalised her by building a tank in Amritsar which is still called *Kaul Sar* after her.

1. According to the author of *Panth Prakash*, 3,000 only.

2. The date of this battle according to *Panth Prakash* was the 13th of Chet, Samvat 1685 vik. (1628 A.D.)

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

2. The second important battle which is also described by Cunningham was provoked by the Guru himself. The Guru had never forgotten the insult offered him by the Nazim of Lahore, by taking forcible possesion of the horses that one of his followers had brought for him from Turkistan. He now sent to Lahore one of his trusted followers,[1] who had been a daring free-booter before joining the Guru's army, to try and bring back the two horses.

Bidhi Chand disguised himself as a grass-cutter and was gradually appoined as a groom in the royal stables. A branch of the Ravi then flowed just under the fort washing its walls. One dark night Bidhi Chand mounted one of the horses and jumped into the river below and brought it safely to the Guru. The Guru was delighted but the sight of the horse made him pine for its companion and Bidhi Chand was sent to try his luck again. This time he disguised himself as a *Khoji* or Scout and pretended to be able to trace out any kind of thief. He was soon taken into the fort and told to try his art in tracing out the thief who had stolen the Royal horse. He prayed to be left alone on the spot where the theft had been committed, and watching his opportunity he got on the back of the

---

1. According to *Guru Bilas* and *Panth Prakash* it was Bedhi Chand, a Jat of Chhina tribe and native of Sur Song.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

other horse and jumped with it again into the river.

He, however, kept his word and, just before jumping over, shouted at the top of his voice and told them who the thief was and where the stolen horse had gone. At the same time he hurled a defiance at them and challenged them to recover, if they dared both the horses from the true King, Guru Hargovind, his master.

The result was a powerful expedition sent against the Guru. Abdullah Khan, Salim Khan and Bahlol Khan, attacked the Guru with a force of 2,200 strong. A battle was fought at the village of *Lahra* in Malwa and the Guru was again victorious.

3. After this battle the Guru thought it expedient to retire from the field for some time. Accordingly he retreated to the deserts of Bathinda, spreading his doctrines there and making new converts. After about two years he paid a flying visit to Amritsar, which city, owing to his hostile relations with the Government, he had practically abandoned, and retired to Kartarpur, near Jullundhur. Hostilities in the meantime broke out between the Guru and his foster-brother, Payanda Khan. The latter was a

---

1. The date according to *Panth Prakash* was Pos, Samvat 1688, or December 1631 A.D. No English Historian has given the date of this battle.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

good athlete and an excellent soldier He had led the Guru's troops in all the battles, and had naturally begun to feel that he had been the cause of the Guru's repeated victories.[1] A quarrel arose between the two over a trifling matter.[2] The insolence of the Guru was rankling in the Emperor's heart, and the son of Chandu and his own cousin, the son of Prithi, had always been waiting for an opportunity to take revenge on him. They made common cause with Payanda, flattered him for his strength, courage and generalship, and all together went to the Emperor offering to destroy the Guru this time if they were given sufficient troops. Accordingly in April 1634 A.D. the Guru was attacked at Kartarpur. A desperate battle was fought. The Gūru killed the traitorous Payanda with his own hand, and the Moghul army was repulsed with great slaughter, Chandu's son also being among the slain.

---

1. The Guru always treated him with the greatest kindness. He had celebrated his marriage at his own expense and had built for him an elegant house and even an inn and a mosque in Sri Hargovindpore to please him.

2. According to Cunningham it was the detention by Payanda of a favourite hawk of the Guru's. According to *Panth Prakash* and *Guru Bilas* it was due to the meanness of Payanda's son-in-law who had stolen among other things a beautiful sword and a pearl necklace belonging to the Guru's son. Munshi Sohan Lal says, Payanda incurred the Guru's displeasure by making over to his son-in-law the horse and *Khilat* the Guru had given him for his personal use.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Victorious as the Guru was, he did not think it safe to live any longer in the plains. Consequently he retired to Kiratpur in the hill where he lived in perfect peace till he died in 1644 A.D.

Hargovind was the first of the Sikh Gurus to have entered upon a military career. And his record shows that he had not girt the sword upon his loins in vain "After Hargovind the 'disciples' were in little danger of relapsing into the limited merit or utility of monks and mendicants"[1] Not only was it made clear to them that wordly pursuits were quite compatible with the deepest religious spirit and highest piety and to bear arms in defence of their homes and hearths was a paramount duty,[2] but their continued successes had made them realize their own power and the weakness of the Moghul Government. An anecdote is given in *Dabistan* which shows the great power to which the Sikhs under Hargovind had attained. One of his followers was suspected of having mutilated an image. The several neighbouring Rajas, who were of course all idolatrous, *complained* to the Guru. The Guru summoned the Sikh and asked him if he had done it. The Sikh declared that he would suffer death if the god gave evidence against him. "How can the

---

1. Cunningham, p. 54.

2. Manu allows the destruction of *atatais*, i.e., aggressors.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

god speak", said the Rajas, "How will he save you then", retorted the Sikh, and there the matter ended.

That the Guru was fully conscious of his latent influence and the great capabilities of his followers is shown by another anecdote which is given in the same book. In course of conversation with the author of *Dabistan* who was one of his intimate friends[1] the Guru once played upon the credulity, or rebuked the vanity, of his Muhammadan friend. "A Raja of the North", said he, "has sent an ambassador to ask about a place called Delhi and the name and parentage of its King. I was astonished that he had not heard of the Commander of the faithful, the lord of the ascendant, and so on."[2]

---

1. Mohsin Fani states in his book that he came in contact with the Guru in 1053 A.H. and his account of the first five Gurus was communicated to him by Hargovind while his account of the sixth Guru is based upon his own observations.

2. See Cunningham, p. 57.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER VIII

Peaceful Organisation

1.—HAR RAI (1645-1662)

Hargovind was succeeded by his grandson, Har Rai, the younger son of his eldest son Gurditta who had predeceased him. Har Rai was only fourteen when he ascended the *gaddi*. The Sihks had just passed through a stormy career, and it was natural that a pause should ensue.

The cause of peace was moreover strengthened by two additional causes :—

1. One was the natural disposition of Har Rai, who was endowed with a peace-loving nature and reflective mind, preferring the solitude of hills and quiet meditation to the excitement of the chase or the din of war. It is said that while walking one day in his garden his cloak came in contact with a number of flowers and dashed them to the ground. The Guru was so touched by the incident that ever after he carried his cloak carefully in his hand when walking in his garden.[1] A man who was moved by the destruction of a flower, like Har Rai, was not fit to lead armies against the Moghuls.

---

1. The story is given in *Panth Prakash*.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

2. The temptation to arms offered by the mild rule of Jahangir and Shahjahan was removed by the iron hand of Aurangzeb in whose time the Moghul Government attained the highest vigour and power. The ruthless way in which he disposed of his brothers and father was not calculated to encourage hope or confidence in a rebel of Har Rai's position and character.

Owing to these circumstances the only time Guru Har Rai had recourse to arms was when he was called upon by friendship's claims to defend Dara Shikoh who was all but a Hindu and a sort of disciple of the Gurus. In 1648 A.D. the prince's life had been saved by a medicine sent by the Guru. Ever since then he felt grateful to him and his Hindu sentiments and admiration of the Guru's pious life had strengthened their relations into intimate friendship. It was in 1658 A.D. when Dara was being hotly pursued by Aurangzeb's troops that he resorted to the Guru for help. The Guru sent out a detachment of his men who contested the passage of the Beas with Aurangzeb's troops, and prevented them from crossing the river until Dara had reached a place of comparative safety.

Aurangzeb was not the man to forget this affront from an unexpected quarter and as soon as he was established on the throne of Delhi he summoned the Guru to his presence. Har Rai did not answer summons in person but

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

sent his eldest son Ram Rai to explain the matter to His Majesty. Ram Rai was treated kindly,[1] but was detained as a hostage at the Court to insure the tranquillity of the Punjab.

Har Rai never took up arms afterwards but busied himself in the work of peaceful organisation. Some of the most powerful families became his followers and members of the Sikh Theocracy.

---

1. Ram Rai seems to have been a clever courtier, caring more for the Emperor's pleasure than for the strict truth. There is a line in the *Granth* which means, "The dust of the Moslem's body was made into potter's clay and manufactured into bricks and pots and when put in the fire it raised a cry of agony." The Emperor asked him why the Mussalman had been thus abused in the sacred book. The diplomatic boy at once said that it was a mistake of the scribe. The word really meant was *Beiman*, or an infidel, and not Mussalman. No wonder that Aurangzeb was pleased and pardoned the Guru. For Ram Rai, however, his cleverness proved suicidal. The Guru was enraged to hear at what cost of truth and courage his safety had been purchased and forthwith disinherited his cowardly though clever son. The anecdote is given on the authority of *Panth Prakash*. Cunningham wrongly ascribed Ram Rai's disinherison to his being born of an inferior mother or maid-servant. Har Rai had four wives, all sisters, being born of the same parents. The Sikh writers give the names of the four maids that accompanied Har Rai's four wives, but not even the remotest suggestion is made about Ram Rai's being born of any one of them.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Bhai Bhaktu[1] the founder of the Bhai family of Hythel, whose co-operation proved so important to Lord Lake during his pursuit of Holkar, was a companion of Guru Har Rai.

The important Bhai family of Bagarian[2] also trace their origin to the same Guru, and Dharm Singh, their ancestor, came into pro minence under him. Phool, the ancestor of the ruling chiefs of Patiala, Jind and Nabha, and Kala, the first of the Sardars of Lohgarh, were also set on their way to greatness by the fostering care of Har Rai.

11-HARKISHEN AND TEGH BAHADUR (1661-1675)

Har Rai died in 1661 A.D. leaving the *gaddi* to his younger son Harkishen who was only five years old at the time of accession. Ram Rai, the elder brother, was a favourite at the court of Aurangzeb, and complained to the Emperor against his father's decision setting aside his superior claims[3] to the *gaddi*,

---

1. It was Gora, son of Bhaktu, who once saved the Guru's harem and baggage from falling into the hands of Moghul army while crossing the Sutlej.

2. Between the Sutlej and the Jumna.

3. It would have been too preposterous for Ram Rai to lay claim to the *gaddi* if he had been the son of a handmaiden as Cunningham would suggest and I have already shown that he could

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

and pointed out how under the rule of an infant, as Harkishen was, the whole work of his ancestors would go to wreck and ruin, and the more ambitious of their followers would be unchecked to create trouble in the Punjab. This appeal was based on plausible grounds and the Emperor summoned the infant Guru to his presence. Harkishen reached Delhi and was confirmed in the succession but was soon down with small-pox of which he died in 1664 A.D.[1]

---

not be born of an inferior mother for his step-mothers and his own mother were all the daughters of a leading Khatri of Anupshahr. The giving away of all the daughters to one man is a curious phenomenon but not difficult to understand when we consider that the more respectable and old fashioned Hindus would not give their daughter to another man if she was once intended to be married to one man. The cases of Chandu's daughter and the daughter of the third Guru himself are cases in point. In the case under discussion the grandfather, the father, the mother and the eldest brother, each individually intended to marry a girl to the Guru and their choices being all different and the bride-groom elect being the same all the four had to go together.

1. Harkishen was an exceptionally bright boy. Many anecdotes illustrating his prodigious intelligence are given by Sikh writers. Cunningham says he was once taken into the Royal Palace at Delhi as the ladies of the Harem wanted to see him. He was surrounded on all sides by ladies who were equally well dressed, and was asked to find out the Empress who was among them. Harkishen at once recognized her and went and sat in her lap. (According to *Panth*

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

While on his death bed he sent the insignia of Gurusship to his grandfather's younger brother Tegh Bahadur, who lived the life of a recluse in the village of Bakala.[1] Tegh Bahadur ascended the *gaddi* in 1664. He was a man of peaceful disposition, and though he had been accompanying his father in his warfare, and his father had left his arms to him, he preferred to be called Tegh Bahadur[2] rather than by his warlike name. His piety and hospitality soon spread his fame, and Sikhs from all sides began to flock to him. Though a man of great humility and simple tastes in private life, his *darbar* always possessed royal splendour and magnificence, and he was always spoken of and addressed as *Sachha Padshah* or True King. Ram Rai was still a favourite at the Imperial Court and had never ceased to

---

Parkash it was the Rani of Jey Singh Sawai on whom the test was made). There is another interesting anecdote showing his extraordinary wit. Aurangzeb one day caught hold of both his hands in one of his and said "what can you do now if I give you a slap"?. "O King of Kings," said the boy "he whom you take by one hand has nothing to fear. What have I to fear now you have taken both my hands."

1. It is remarkable that even when succession became hereditary the best available men were appointed to the *Masnad* of Gurusship. Even this child of eight made the best choice, passing over his own brother and uncle.

2. Hero of the cooking pot, i.e., one who excells in hospitality and compassion.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

cherish a hope to be one day installed in his father's place. Aurangzeb only wanted a pretext to get rid of a formidable man like Tegh Bahadur who stood in the way of his Islamic zeal. On a representation being made by Ram Rai he was summoned to Delhi. The Raja of Jaipore, however, was one of the Guru's admirers, and he interceded on his behalf saying : " such holy men rather went on pilgrimages than aspired to sovereignty, and he would take him with himself on his approaching march to Bengal." Tegh Bahadur accompanied the Raja[1] to the East, went with him to Assam, and helped him in gaining the victory over the Raja of Assam[2] who afterwards became a follower of the Guru.

After this the Guru returned to the Punjab, and buying a piece of land from the Raja of Kahloor founded the village of Makhowal and settled there. The Sikh flocked to him again and this gave another opportunity to Ram Rai to poison the Emperor s mind, if it required any poisoning at all, against Tegh Bahadur. He was again sum moned to Delhi on charges of treason, and refusing to embrace Islam, was put to death

---

1. Jai Singh according to all accounts. Todd in his *Annals of Rajasthan*, however, says it was Ram Singh, son of Jai Singh, who went to Assam. *Panth Prakash* mentions Raja Bishan Singh, the son of Jai Singh, as in charge of the expedition to Assam. Both the princes might have been there.

2. *Panth Prakash* gives Ram Rai as his name.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

by the Emperor's order with two of his chief companions, one of whom was Mati Ram, the head of the Bhai family of Karyala in the Jhelum District. "The truth," says Cunningham, "seems to be that Tegh Bahadur followed the example of his father with unequal footsteps, and that, choosing for his haunts the wastes between Hansee and the Sutlej, he subsisted himself and his disciples by plunder, in a way, indeed, that rendered him not unpopular with the peasantry. He is further credibly represented to have leagued with a Muhammadan zealot, named Hafiz Adam, and to have levied contributions upon rich Hindoos, while his confederate did the same upon wealthy Mussulmans. They gave a ready asylum to all fugitives, and their power interfered with the prosperity of the country; the imperial troops marched against them, and they were at last defeated and made prisoners. The Muhammadan Saint was banished, but Aurangzeb determined that the Sikh should be put to death."[1]

From this brief account we find that Tegh Bahadur could not do much for the Military organization of the Sikhs. He reigned for about ten years, but all this time

---

1. This is given on the authority of Syed Ghulam Husain, the bigoted author of *Sair-al-Mutaakhkhirin*, which is also quoted but not referred to by the author of the *Panth Prakash*. Cunningham has wrongly put Adam Hafiz for Hafiz Adam, see *Sair*, p. 401 (Nawal Kishore Press).

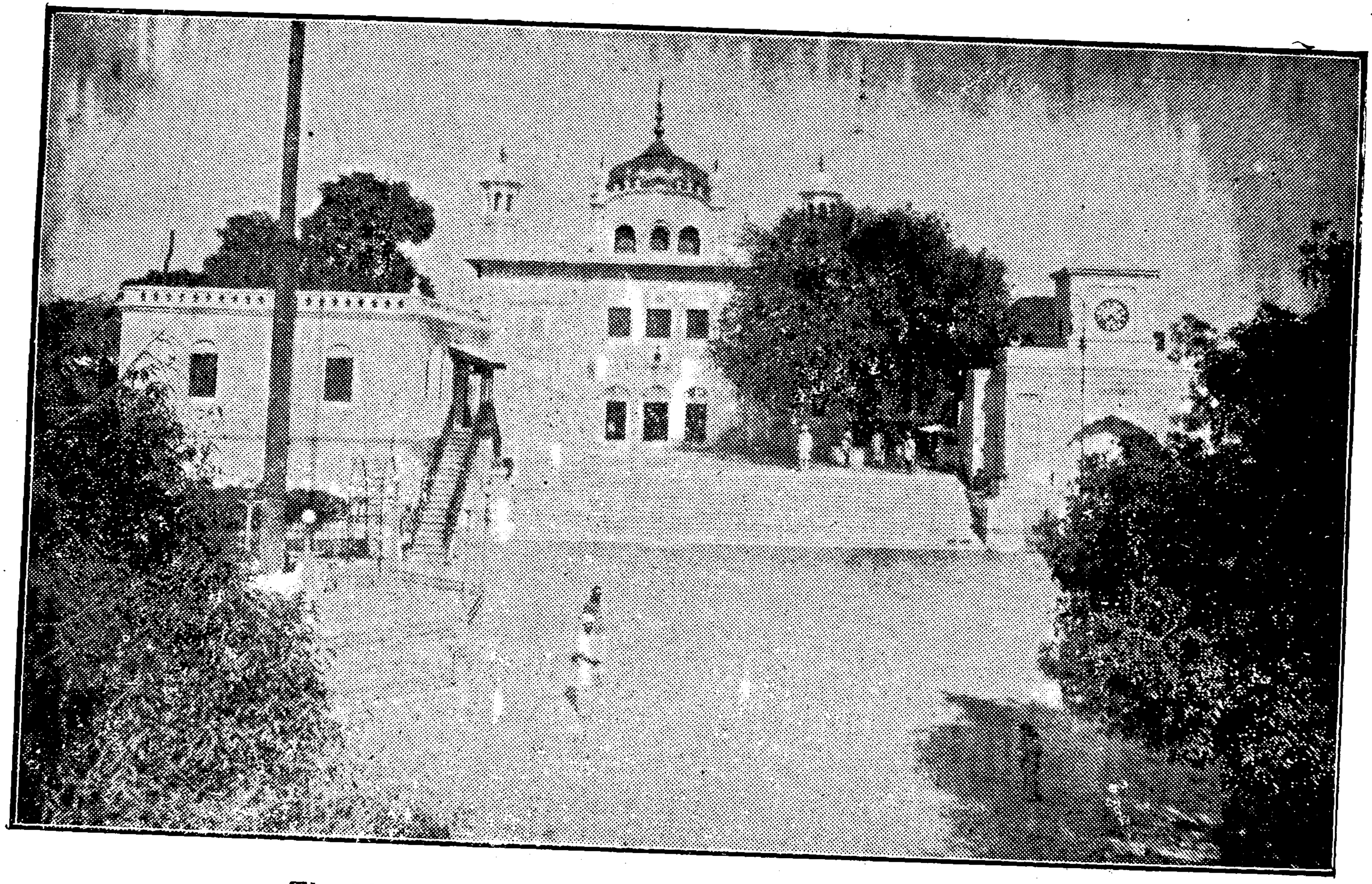
Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

he was harassed by domestic quarrels and Aurangzeb's hatred. No time was left him to rally together the broken and scattered forces of his father, and lead them against the imperial troops, even if he had not been deterred by the boundless power of Aurangzeb. Still, however, we find from *Tegh Bahadur's Travels*[1] that he toured through the Malwa country and completed the work which his predecessors had done in the Manjha and Doaba territories. In his death, however, he surpassed anything that he had done in life. He was known throughout Upper India, was highly revered by Rajput princes, and was actually worshipped by the peasantry of the Punjab. His execution was universally regarded by the Hindus as a sacrifice for their faith. The whole Punjab began to burn with indignation and revenge. The sturdy jats of Manjha and Malwa only wanted a leader under whose banner they could fight and avenge the insult done to their religion. This leader they found in the youthful Govind.

---

1. Translated into English by Sardar Atar Singh, Chief of Bhadaur.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org



The Mausoleum of Guru Govind Singh at Nanded (Deccan)

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org



Govind Singh, the Tenth and last Guru of the Sikhs.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER IX

Sikhism under Govind

HIS POSITION AND PLANS (1675-1695)

The death of Tegh Bahadur marks a most important epoch in the history of Sikhism. Under Govind its character was entirely changed. The Sikhs had undoubtedly given some promise of their future greatness even before the advent of Govind Singh, nevertheless the chief characteristics of Sikhism were still devotion and piety. Under Govind, pugnacity and valour became the most important features of the sect. As the innovations made by Govind were most radical in their nature, and the task undertaken by him was most gigantic and arduous, it seems to be necessary to make a brief review of the circumstances under which he was placed and of the advantages and disadvantages of the situation in which he found himself at his father's death.

We have seen how Nanak emancipated the minds of the Punjab Hindus from superstition, hypocrisy and cant, how Angad gave the early Sikhs an individuality of their own, and how Amar Das saved them from drifting into asceticism and aimlessness of life. We have also seen how Ram Das extended the power and influence of his sect, and how Arjun made it into a theocratic community by

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

giving it a code, a capital, a treasury and a Chief in the person of the Guru. It has also been stated how the sixth Guru organised a sort of army and by winning continuous victories showed his followers the possibilities open to their race. The work of military organisation was checked after that by the peaceful nature of the succeeding Gurus and the vigour of Aurangzeb's rule. The interval of peace was followed by the execution of Tegh Bahadur which stirred up once more the dying embers of Hindu hatred of the Moslem rule.

This was the past which Govind inherited, and it is evident that it was not a mean asset in the glorious career upon which he was about to enter.

Another circumstance which operated for the benefit of Govind was the constitution and condition of the Moghul Government under which he lived. In the first place, India was quite destitute of any constitution. The will of the sovereign was the law of the land, and the Governors and Lieutenant-Governors followed the examples set by their liege-lord. The Courts, where they at all existed, were centres of corruption and mere manufactories of oppression and extortion, and, where offences against the State were concerned, there was not even a semblance of justice. The Government was an absolute despotism maintained by the sword and

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

supported by fomenting differences between the Sesodia and the Rathor and by setting the Sawais against both, and all the three against the Mahrattas.

To the innate defects and evils of the system was added the bigotry and fanaticism of Aurangzeb. Hindus were deprived of all State patronage and excluded from all Government offices. A capitation tax, known as the *Jizya*, was imposed upon them and they were even forbidden to go in palanquins or ride Arab horses. Temples were razed to the ground, sacred threads were broken, and Hindus were compelled to embrace Islam. The result was that all Hindus were disaffected and began to think of putting an end to this galling tyranny. Nor was the Government in a compact body. Aurangzeb was suspicious of every one and his suspicions soon reached such a climax that, driven by wild dismay and panic, he sent his own son to prison. When a Government reaches this stage of uncertainty, suspicion, dismay and panic, it may safely be said to be on a fair way to ruin. The sun of the Moghul power had reached its zenith towards the middle of Aurangzeb's reign, and was swiftly descending to the horizon during the declining years of the emperor. Muhammadan as well as Hindu chiefs were always on the point of rebellion, and could only be kept down by the sword, with the result that the foundations of the empire were being gradually undermined.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Another circumstance which worked advantageously for Guru Govind Singh was the fact that Aurangzeb was busily engaged in subduing the independent Kingdoms of the Deccan and in trying to nip in the bud the rising power of the Mahrattas. He could not trust any of his generals, and like all masterful and conceited geniuses believed that everything would go wrong but for his personal supervision. This necessitated his absence from the Capital for many years, and left the Punjab free for any enterprising spirit to mature his plans.

The constitution of the Moghul Government, the bigotry of Aurangzeb, and the Deccan wars, thus afforded a great advantage to Govind Singh, and he was fully prepared to make the best use of it. Still, however, thanks to the tolerance of Akbar and the genius of Todar Mal, the country was thoroughly organised. It was divided into *Subahs*, *Subahs* into minor divisions, under *Karoris*[1] who had the *Amils* under them, while the *Amils* worked through the *Karkuns* and *Khasravises* who were paid to keep order in the villages, and to collect the revenue. The system was practically the same as to-day and minus the advantages of Railway and Telegraph, information was as easily and completely available to the Moghuls in those days as it is to-day to the

---

1. The officer in charge of a tract of land producing one Karor of *tankas* annually or Rs. 3,12,500.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

British rulers of India[1] Again though the ordinary Hindus were under a ban, and were excluded from Government service, Hindus of position and rank were not wanting who had thrown in their lot with the Government of the day, and in return for the protection and favour they received or for merely being suffered to retain their lands, always sided with the Government of the day, and at the slightest disturbance of the peace came forward with declarations of loyalty and offers of active support. This means that although the masses of the Hindus were bitter against the galling yoke of tyranny, the so-called natural leaders of the people were most officiously loyal to the throne and most bitterly hostile to all progressive movements, because they feared the loss of Court favour and ultimately the loss of land and power which their neutrality as well as supposed complicity was sure to bring in its wake.

Moreover, the Punjab was the first to be conquered, and if Moghul Government was thoroughly established anywhere, it was in the Punjab; situated between Delhi and Kabul it was most rigidly supervised and most strongly governed. Muhammadan population was the largest, and, consisting of the peasantry as it did, it was the strongest in the Punjab. And although the masses of Muhammadans

---

1. Akbar has established an efficient post system, having two horsemen and some footmen stationed at every five Kos. *Latif's History of the Punjab.*

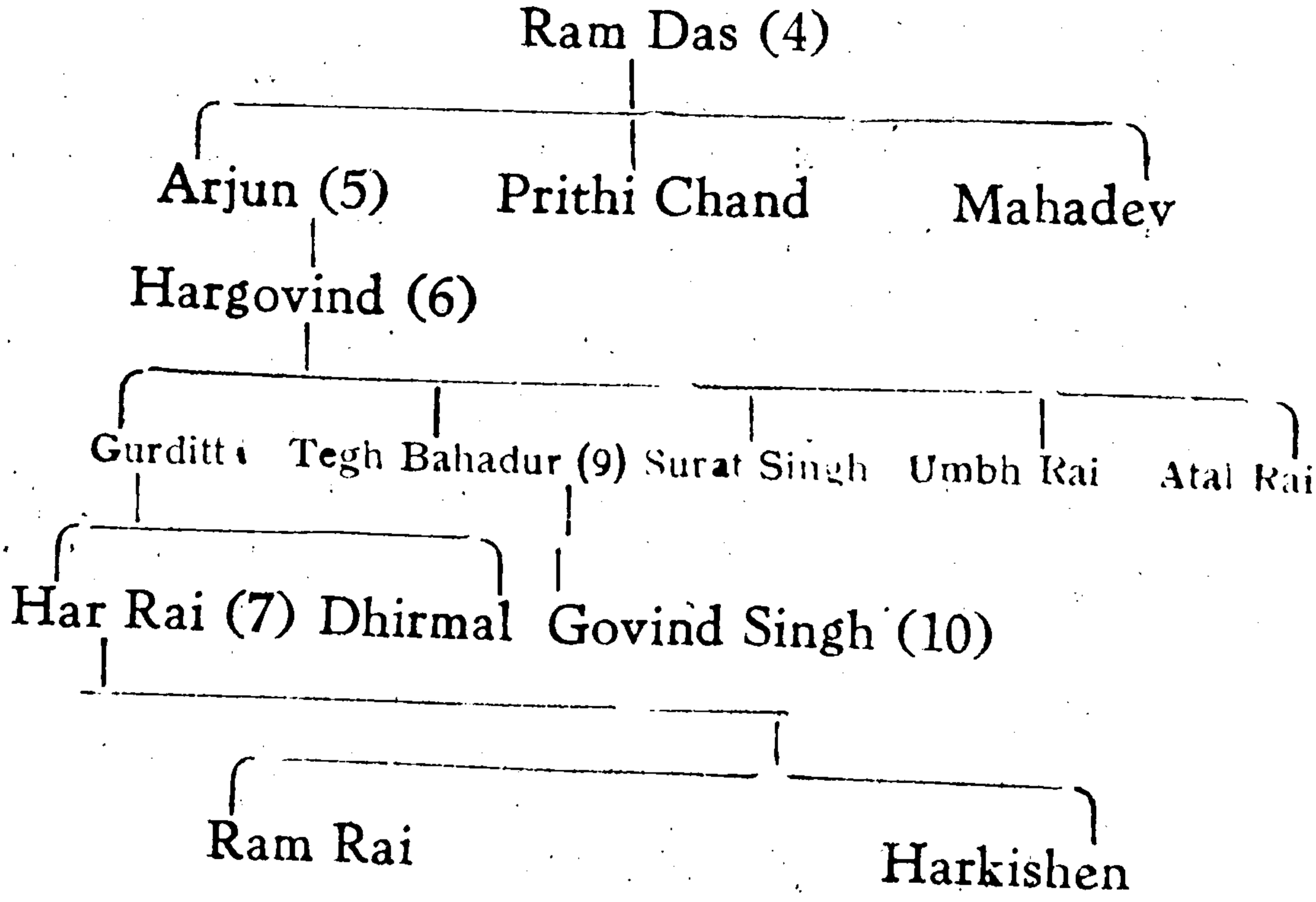
Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

lived side by side with Hindus as brothers and sisters, and did not approve of the bigotry of Augrangzeb, they could not be expected to countenance any movement which had for its aim the overthrow of the Muhammadan Government.

In addition to these disadvantages the Guru had to contend with the members of his own family[1] who had been driven by personal grudges into the enemy's camp, and spared no pains to thwart, harass and injure Govind Singh. Guru Govind Singh's father had been raised to the *gaddi* in preference to the descendants of his eldest brother, and his cousins had

---

1. As these rivalries began after the fourth Guru, the following genealogical tree of his descendants will facilitate the understanding of their relations.



Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

never forgiven him for what they called the usurpation of their title. Ram Rai and Dhir Mal were favourites at the Court, and had played a great part in inciting Aurangzeb to have Govind's father executed on charges of treason and heresy. The execution of the father, however, brought no relief to the son, for his rivals continued actively to pour poison into the Emperor's ears, and for some time Govind not only felt incapacitated to carry on his propaganda but was never sure even of his personal safety.

It was in this position that the young Govind found himself in 1675 after the execution of his father by the Government of Delhi. He was hardly fifteen years old at the time. To think of revenge or active resistance was out of the question. His martyred father had no doubt betore leaving for Delhi invested him with the insignia of Gurushipp, and the faithful Sikhs were readyto follow any leader who would revenge their Guru's death, but howsoever strong might Govind's determination have been, it would have been suicidal for a little boy of fifteen to declare open war at once against one of the greatest empires of the world. His grandfather had no doubt succeeded in getting together an irregular army of seven thousand men and defeating the imperial troops in two or three actions but these very successes were now working, in a way, against Govind Singh. The Government, then taken by surprise, was now always on the alert. The

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

mild Shahjahan had been succeeded by the iron-handed Aurangzeb. The Sikh army consisting largely of free-booters and rebels had been dispersed, and the policy of peace followed by Govind's immediate predecessors, whether by inclination or by necessity, had in no way encouraged the growth of the military spirit which the sixth Guru had infused into his followers. The whole work had thus to be done from the beginning. Govind was obviously reduced, for a time, to a state of utter helplessness. The whole Province was terror-stricken under the active bigotry of Aurangzeb,[1] and for the time being it seemed to be sure death to Govind even to venture into the plains of the Punjab. The hills were the only parts of the province which had not been thoroughly subdued. Their inaccessibility and comparative barrenness had saved them from annexation. Guru Govind Singh thought it best to take refuge in those natural fastnesses, quietly nurse his wrath, and mature his plans for avenging his father's death and emancipating his down-tradden race. Most great men who have left any mark in the history of their race have practised seclusion and retirement, and in the solitude of the hills or the forest, of monasteries or of the desert, have practised austereties and meditation which are the only means of self-conquest

---

1. He appointed Mullahs with a party of horse attached to each to check all display of Hindu religious activity. Latif's *History of the Punjab*, p. 176.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

without which the conquest of the world is a dream. The great Buddha was in the jungle for years and years. Christ disappeared from the world while quite a boy and emerged from his seclusion at the age of thirty. The Prophet of Islam was in practical seclusion up to the age of forty-five. Govind followed their example, and retired to the hills to gather strength and wait until time was ripe to strike a blow.

In the quiet seclusion of the Himalayan mountains the young Guru set himself first to the task of self-improvement. For anyone, who wants to do the kind of work Govind did, it is essential to have all the benefits that education can give, and to develop all his faculties to the highest degree of perfection possible. He called together great Pundits from Patna and Benares and great scholars of Persian from the Punjab. He had thus a large number of scholars and poets in his service and the names of almost 60 of them have been handed down to posterity. He assiduously learnt all they could teach him, and hereditary, as the gift of poetry had been in his family, he developed a style of Hindi poetry which has remained unsurpassed since his times. He went through the whole range of Epic literature in Sanskrit, and stored his mind with the soul stirring legends of the Mahabharata and the Puranas. He seems to have been deeply impressed by the idea which runs throughout the Puranic literature, *viz*, the

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

idea of a saviour appearing from time to time to uphold righteousness and destroy unrighteousness, to uproot evil and establish good, to destroy the oppressor and rescue the weak and the innocent[1]. The stories of Rama destroying the Demon King of Lanka, the son of Devaki crushing Kansa, and especially the exploits of that personification of righteousness and divine power, called Durga, breaking the skulls, and drinking the blood of Mahkhasur and other demons, filled his heart with hope and confidence. These stories read in the light of the existing tyranny and oppression on the one hand, and weakness and innocence on the other, made him feel that the time was again ripe for the fulfilment of Sri Krishna's promise for the appearance of one who would come to the rescue of the helpless and strike down the arrogant oppressors And like all great men who have helped in the advancement of humanity he felt that he himself was the man required by the times. He has related his story in a powerful poem, called *Vichtra Natak* in which he declares that God had been sending down great teachers from time to time for the guidance of the human race, but, he deplores that many of them began to arrogate divine honours to themselves. Though deeply impressed by the great truth embodied in the doctrine of divine incarnation, *viz.*, God's coming to the rescue

---

1. Cf. *Gita*, IV, 7, 8.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

of humanity in times of need, he regretted that the various messengers and prophets sent by God had either claimed divine honours for themselves or the world had raised them to the position of God. Therefore while strongly believing in his heaven-ordained mission he humbly declared that he was "but a servant of the Supreme Being, and anybody calling him God would pass life after life in hell."

The result of the twenty years' seclusion and solitude that the Guru enjoyed in the midst of the Himalayan hills may be described in the following words :—

(1) He received the best practical education that the time could give, and ran through the whole range of Persian and Sanskrit Epic and historical literature.

(2) By practice and by association with the most eminent Hindi poets of the day he developed a class of warlike poetry, unknown in the Punjab before, which he turned to such a great account in rousing the dormant energies of the people.

(3) He acquired a mastery in riding and shooting, being especially an adept in the use of the bow. He accustomed himself to fatigue and hardy life by constantly hunting the tiger and the wild boar in thick forests of the hills.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

(4) He realised the miserable condition of his race, and by constant meditation came to feel that he had a mission to fulfil, and God had sent him for the amelioration of his nation.

(5) He chalked out for himself the lines on which he was to work, and his plan was formed with such a decision and completeness that not a little of the policy he had settled was abandoned or changed by him throughout his chequered and stormy career.

The object that the Guru set before himself was to infuse a new life into the dead bones of the Hindus, to make them forget their differences and present a united front against the tyranny and persecution to which they were exposed, in one word, to make once more a living nation of them and enable them to regain their lost independence.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER X

Govind Creates a Nation

(1695 A.D.)

From this point onward the work of Guru Govind Singh can be divided into two parts, *viz.*:—

(1) The creation of a nation, and

(2) His armed campaigns.

When I say the creation of a nation, I mean the words to be taken quite literally, for when Guru Govind Singh began his work, there was no such thing as a Hindu nation. Like Sivaji he had first to forge the sword with which he was to fight.

Since the fall of Anangpal, no leader had arisen in the Punjab. Although some Hindu Zamindars who called themselves Rajas still lurked and lingered in the mountain fastnesses of Kangra, the Hindus had ceased to exist as a political power in the Punjab. Guru Nanak had considerably elevated the morals of the Punjab Hindus, and other predecessors of Govind had done something to make a peaceful organisation of them. But the work of making a nation of them was reserved for the exceptional genius of Govind. And

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the method he adopted to achieve his object, though not quite original, proved most effective under the circumstances. He had realized that the Hindus as a race were too mild by nature, too contented in their desires, too modest in their aspirations, too averse to physical exertion and hopelessly scrupulous in giving pain to others, even to their enemies. He also realised that they were a religious people, and terror-stricken and demoralised as they had become, they were still strongly attached to religion and had shown great readiness to suffer for their faith. There could be only one way of moving such a race. They had religion but no nationality. The only way to make a nation of them was to make nationalism their religion. And Guru Govind Singh did make nationalism a religion with them, and all that goes to form nationality was incorporated as articles of faith in this new creed.

The first element of nationalism is unity, and this point was the first to receive Govind's attention. He had realised that caste was a great barrier to unity, especially the caste as it existed in his time. Govind sent some of his disciples to one Raghu Nath Pandit to study Sanskrit with him. He refused to teach them because they were not Brahmans. This supercilious exclusiveness, Govind rightly understood, was not calculated to encourage the growth of nationalism. He, therefore, struck at the very root of the evil

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

by declaring that caste was an after-growth in the Hindu social system, and no body could call himself a true Sikh if he did not give up the prejudice of caste, and did not regard all his fellow-Sikhs as his brothers. The four castes, he said, were like pan, supari, chuna and katha i.e., betel-leaf, betel-nut, lime and catechu, none of which by itself could give ruddiness to the lips, strength to the teeth or relish to the tongue. Guru Govind not only tried to make one caste out of the four, but he went a step further and at once removed all unevenness of religious privileges and established a theocratic democracy This meant that the Khalsa formed a brotherhood in which the lowest was equal to the highest.

The Guru embraced everyone into his fold and gave everyone to drink of the Amrit[1] or nectar of the creed that he had discovered.

One day as the Guru lay encamped on the hill of Keshgarh, he addressed a mass meeting of his followers. At the end of his speech he drew out his sword and said in a loud voice that the goddess every day asked him for a head. "Is there any Sikh", he asked, "who is prepared to lay down his head for

---

1. *Amrit Chhakna* or drinking nectar is another name for Sikh Baptism.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the goddess."[1] For a moment there was dead silence. The Guru asked again, and Daya Ram, one of his followers, stepped forward. He took him by the hand into his tent where he had a goat provided before hand. He seated the heroic Daya in the tent, and slaying the goat with his own hand, came out with the blood dripping from his sword. He appealed again for a head. with the blood-red sword brandished in the air. Another Sikh came forward, and another, and yet another too, making five altogether, prepared to lay down their heads at one word from their leader. The Guru was over-joyed at this signal proof of heroic devotion and self-sacrifice. He brought them out from his tent all alive and hale and hearty to the great wonder of the audience, and declared that it was a very good omen, and the succcss of the Khalsa was assured All the Sikhs present there were greatly ashamed at their cowardice and were smitten with sorrow and regret for not having made a voluntary offering of themselves at the feet of their leader.

Of the five who had offered their heads, one was a Khatri, all the rest being so-called

---

1. This version is according to the *Panth Parkash*. English historians, including Cunningham hold that a head was required for sacrifice to the goddess and Cunninghan says twenty-five Sikhs offered themselves, one of whom was sacrified. This version, however, does not find favour with Sikh historians and as Cunningham has not given any authority for his version it is hardly reliable.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Sudras. But the Guru called them Panj Pyaras, or the Beloved Five, and baptised them after the manner he had introduced for initiation into his brotherhood. He enjoined the same duties upon them, gave them the same privileges and as a token of newly acquired brotherhood all of them dined together.

The Guru's views of democratic equality were much more advanced than the mere equality among his followers could satisfy. In his system there was no place even for the privileges of the chief or the leader. No leader, he believed, could be fit to lead unless he was elected or accepted by the followers. History shows that individuals or classes enjoying a religious or sacerdotal superiority have been only too loth to forego even a particle of their privileges. But the Guru, though regarded by his faithful followers as the greatest of prophets, was made of different stuff, and had too much political insight to stand on an exclusive eminence apart from his followers. Therefore when he had initiated his first five disciples, his beloved five, he was initiated by them in turn, taking the same vows as they had done, and claiming no higher privileges than those he had allowed them. Soon after he called a meeting[1] of all his followers and announced his new doctrines to them.

---

1. As many as 80,000 Sikhs assembled in less than a fortnight. Latif, p. 263.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

This, the destruction of caste prejudice, the introduction of a theocratic democracy, was the first step that Govind took to bring about unity which is the first element of nationalism. He supplemented this moral force by some other ordinances, some of which may be called more or less mechanical in their nature. They were as follows :—

(1) All the Sikh names were to end alike, as they do up to now *i.e.*, in the word Singh (a lion).

(2) All had to follow one form of salutation.

(3) There was to be no external object of homage except the Granth.

(4) The multiplicity of Hindu places of pilgrimage was too great to encourage national unity, so the Guru fixed upon Amritsar as the chief place of pilgrimage for the Sikhs, and that town has ever since been the Mecca of the followers of the Gurus, and all classes of Sikhs whether Brahmans or Pariahs are allowed to bathe in the tank of nectar and worship in Hari Mandir or the Temple of God.

(5) The Guru strengthened these bonds of Union by certain still more mechanical devices which have remained intact throughout the last two centuries, and are at the present day acquiring still greater importance and strength. "The Guru was a philosopher,"

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

says Cunningham, "and understood fully how the imagination of men could be wrought upon." He thoroughly realised the hypnotising power of certain external forms and symbols, and knew what an inspiration men often receive from a change in their outward appearance. This is the secret of the power of pledges and vows, of penances and austerities, and even such sectarian symbols, as the frontal mark of a Shakti-worshipper or the Tulsi necklace of a Vaishnavite. This is the secret of the Hindu *upanayana* and the Christian Baptism. This was the significance of the *pahul*[1] or the baptism introduced by Govind and it was to induce that electric force that he introduced certain other ordinances by which the Sikhs stood out as the chosen of

---

1. The ceremony of *Pahul* is conducted as follows:—

The candidate, after he has bathed and put on clean clothes, takes his seat in the midst of the assembly, generally called together for the purpose. A Sikh who has the reputation of being regular in the observance of Sikh rules of conduct mixes some sugar with water in an iron basin and stirs it with a double-edged dagger, at the same time chanting some verses of the *Granth Sahib*. After that this solution is sprinkled over the hair and body of the candidate and a part of it is given him to drink. He is made to repeat certain vows which constitute the *Reht* or the Sikh rules of conduct. The solution is called *Amrit* and is supposed to confer immortality on this new son of Govind Singh and makes him a Singh (lion) and a true Kshatrya. At the end of the ceremony *Karah Prasad* or *Halwa* is distributed among those present.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the Lord with a mission to fulfil in this world. He made it a rule that all Sikhs should abstain from smoking, and should wear turbans and always keep the following five *Kakas i e.*, five things whose names begin with K. *viz.*, *Kesh* or long hair and long beards, *Kangha* or comb, *Kirpan* or a sword, *Kara* or a steel bracelet, and *Kachh* or a sort of nicker-bocker which came to possess the same significance as the *toqa virilis* of the Roman youth. If it was not a copy of the uniform of Bhim's Army mentioned in the ancient Sanskrit work "Nala Champa" by Trivikram Bhatt, it was a strange coincidence that the Guru prescribed a similar uniform for his followers. The observances at once singled out the genuine Sikhs from the mass of the luke-warm Hindus and produced a cohesion in the internal body of the Khalsa which was in a short time to make a united nation of them.

Abolition of caste prejudices equality of privileges with one another and with the Guru, common worship, common place of pilgrimage, common baptism for all classes, and lastly, common external appearance—these were the means, besides common leadership and the community of aspirations, which Govind employed to bring about unity among his followers, and by which he bound them together into a compact mass before they were hurled against the legions of the great Moghuls

But a mass of wax figures bearing the same hall-mark and dressed up in the same

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

fashion, or a number of gramophones repeating the same records cannot form a nation. The individuals forming that nation must have life, high aspirations, the will to do and the soul to dare, before they can truly form a nation.

The Guru thoroughly understood the importance of raising their position and aspirations and of inspiring them with confidence and courage. The following were among the means he employed to achieve this very difficult object :—

1. In the first place he inspired them with a belief that they were now under the direct control and protection of God. They were taught as an article of faith to believe that God was always present in the general body of the Khalsa, and that wherever even five Sikhs were assembled the Gūru would be with them.

2. They were further impressed with the idea that they were born to conquer. A political leader has no claim to any leadership if he is not strongly optimistic and does not believe in the ultimate triumph of his cause. The Guru was an embodiment of hope and confidence, and his followers were saturated with the same belief. The new salutation among the Sikhs was to be "*Wahguruji ka Khalsa, Wahguruji ki Fateh.*" The Lord's is the Khalsa, Lord's be the victory. A strong conviction of one's being the chosen

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

instrument of God, and the confidence it inspires, are the strongest guarantees of success, and the Guru had given these guarantees to his followers.

3 To raise their spirits still higher, the Guru changed their name from Sikh into Singh, thus making lions of humble disciples, and "raising them with one stroke to a position of equality with the noblest and most warlike class in India," for up to that time, only the Rajputs bore the exalted title of Singh. They were now as good and as great as the members of the Solar and the Lunar dynasties.

4 Literature was the next means employed to infuse a warlike spirit into the hearts of his followers. The Guru had a host of Poets and Pandits in his service and he caused many stirring stories in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata in *Srimad Bhagwat* and other Puranas to be translated into Hindi. "I have," he says, "cast the Dasam of Bhagwat into Hindi with no other desire but only for the love of holy war." Peasants and Banyas, clerks and *munshis* who had for centuries either read nothing, or had fed themselves on Kareema and Gulistan, Bahar-i-Danish and Bostan, were now reading or heáring in their own tongue the heroic exploits of Rama and Lakshmana, Bheem and Arjuna, and discussing how the boy Krishna killed the demon *Kansa*, and how the fragile goddess despatched with her own hand demons like Mahikhasura. The

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Guru was himself a great poet, and on minds saturated with the spirit of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata his words produced an electrifying effect. "I shall send a sparrow" said he "and lo! the imperial falcons will fall before it." "Each one of my Sikhs," he said, "will fight a hundred thousand or I will not be called Guru Govind Singh."[1] Such words uttered by a man like Govind Singh could never fail to have the desired effect. Men who had never touched a sword or shouldered a gun became heroes. Confectioners and washermen and sweepers and barbers became leaders of armies before whom the Rajas quailed and the Nawabs cowered with terror.

Guru Govind also realised that the overthrow of the oppressive despotism would remain a dream unless the Hindus became all sting. He, therefore, appealed to his followers to withdraw their attention from the pen and the plough, and regard the sword as their principal stay in the world The country of the enemy, whether the oppressive Moghul or the traitorous Hindu, lay open to their enterprise, and the sword could carve their way to power and prosperity, national honour and independence. Robbing the robber, the Guru declared, was no sin, and to torment one's

---

1. Even the prayers introduced by Govind contain imprecations against the *Mlechhas* and invoke God's help for their destruction. Even the water used for baptism was to be stirred with a double-edged dagger.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

tormentors was allowed by the Shastras. Though in his vedantic flights he exhorted his followers to recognise the whole human race as one, his agony at the realisation of his nation's humiliation and torture made him at times burst into hymns of hate. His hymns of prayer while invoking Divine protection for himself and his followers frequently called upon God to pick out with his enemies and destroy them and all the *Mlechhas*. These imprecations were bound to create a bitter anti-Muslim feeling in the minds of the Sikhs which even the lapse of two centuries and more has not worn out or softened to any great degree. It was fully exploited by Sikh adventurers in later times and rendered Sikh-Muslim conflicts even more bitter than the encounters of the Christian crusaders against their Muslim antagonists. The Sikhs finding a new field opened to their ambition began to flock to the Guru in thousands, ceased to remain mere Sikhs, but became Singhs or lions, and began to roam with freedom and hunt their prey in the preserves of the tyrannical despot. These pursuits of the nascent Khalsa added great strength to the brotherhood. They brought funds to the Society, gave exercise to the members, accustomed them to the hardships of military life, made them familiar with the art of guerilla warfare, won over the lukewarm and struck a terror into the hearts of the enemy, while the hearts of the Khalsa were braced and elated by the daily victories.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

The worship of *Shakti* or the goddess of force was very popular among the masses of the Hindus, and it seems that, though enjoined to worship none but the Supreme Being, even the Sikhs cherished a lingering faith in the power of the goddess, and believed in the efficacy of *hom* and other ceremonies to invoke the aid of goddess. The Guru did not believe in any deity except the True and Deathless one, but whether to show his followers that there was no such power, or to win over the popular sympathy and confidence of the populace as the chosen favourite of their favourite Deity, it seems to be beyond doubt (as all historians agree on the point) that the Guru ordered a great sacrifice to be performed with the ostensible object of making the goddess appear. The ceremony is said to have lasted for a year. At the end of that time when Durga Ashtami came round again, the Guru asked the presiding priest when the goddess would make her appearance. The Pundit said that the goddess would reveal herself only if a pure and holy man of noble lineage sacrificed himself at the altar, and had his head flung into the fire. The Guru was apparently pleased, and said to the Pundit with a smile of sarcasism on his lips "where shall we find, reverend sir, a holier man than yourself whose head could form a fitting offering to the goddess." The Pundit was struck dumb and decamped on a false pretext. The Guru flung all the remaining material into the fire and came out from behind the screens with a

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

drawn sword flashing in his hand. The large quantity of the *hom* material thrown in a lump into the fire blazed forth in a large flame which being on a lofty hill was seen for miles all around, and was taken as a sign of the propitiation and appearance of the goddess. The sword which the Guru had brought brandishing in his hand was looked upon as the gift of the goddess to the Guru, and a pledge of victory in his contemplated war upon the enemies of his race. It is not certain if the Guru took any steps to disillusion the people on this point, but this much is quite certain that he appealed to the people to worship the sword, because in those times the sword was the only goddess that could save them. The Guru seems to have meant it to be taken as something more than a mere metaphor. "The sentiment of veneration," says Cunningham, "for that which gives us power, or safety or our daily bread may be traced in all countries. In our own, a sailor impersonates, or almost deifies his ship, and in India the custom of hereditary callings has heightened that feeling which expressed in the language of philosophy becomes the dogma admitting the soul to be increate indeed, but enveloped in the understanding, which again, is designed for our use in the human affairs or until our bliss is perfect." It was this external or inferior spirit, so to speak which, the Guru urged, must devote its energies to the worship and contemplation of the sword while the ncreate soul contemplates God. The Guru

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

cherished the sword as an object of worship and some of his finest verses are those he employed to invoke its aid.[1] His followers were required to stick to the worship of this great deliverer of mankind, and those who were devout in the worship of the sword were promised exemptions from every other kind of religious rites or ceremonies. The devotees of the sword were to be *Krita-nasha*, *Kul-nasha*, *Dharma-nasha*, and *Karma-nasha*, and their devotion to the sword was to be regarded as an act of the highest merit which would bring them power and prosperity in this life and bliss and beatitude in the next.

---

1. The following four verses of Govind Singh forming an invocation to the sword are among the finest of their kind to be met with in any literature of the world and as they are almost wholly in Sanskrit they will be easily understood in all part of India :—

Khaga khanda vihandan, khala dala khandam, ataranmandam vara bhandam ;

Bhuja danda akhandam, tejprachandam, jyotia-mandam bhanupraham,

Sukha santa karnam, kilvikh haranam, durmati-darnam ati sharnam,

Jaya jaya jagkara srishti ubharan mampratipara jaya tegham.—*Vichitra Natak.*

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER XI

Govind's Wars, Wanderings and Death

(1695-1708)

The first half of the Guru's work was done. He had attained a perfect sway over the minds of his followers who were now prepared to follow him in life and in death. He had united them into a compact mass, had elevated their character, raised their aspirations, and withdrawn them from the peaceful occupations of their ancestors to give their undivided attention to the sword This was by far the most important part of his life-work, and it was successfully accomplished.

But his father's death was still unavenged, the despotism of Aurangzeb was still unbroken, and the nation still groaned under the burden of tyranny and oppression. Great as the odds were against which he had to contend, the Guru could not be satisfied unless he had actually struck a blow at the power of Aurangzeb, and at least made an attempt for the emancipation of his race. And he addressed himself to this part of his work with characteristic energy and confidence. His followers now numbered thousands, and thousands were prepared to follow him into the field of battle and regarded it as a blessing

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

to fight and die under his banner. He organised them into troops and bands, and supplemented them by engaging the services of 500 Pathans who formed a part of his cavalry.

His immediate object was to achieve a commanding influence among the Rajas of the hill States, and to establish a principality in the hills to serve as a base of operations against the Moghul Empire With this object in view he built two or three forts along the skirts of the hills between the Sutlej and the Jumna, a post at Pownta near Nahan—a place long afterwards the scene of a severe struggle between the Gurkhas and the English—a retreat at Anandpur, and a third fortress at Chamkaur[1] not far from the well-known town of Rupar.

"As a religious teacher," says Cunningham, "he drew contributions and procured followers from all parts of India, particularly from the Central Punjab known as Manjha, as the splendid physique of the Jats of those parts appealed to him as excellent material which could be effectively exploited to be pitched against the Muslim armies of the Moghuls, but as a leader he perceived the necessity of a military pivot, and as a rebel he was not insensible to the value of a secure retreat."

The first step taken by the Guru, after this military organisation, was probably to

1. Buti Shah adds 3 more, *viz.*, Fatehgarh, Lohgarh, Muktgarh.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

induce the hill Rajas to join him in his proposed compaign against the Government. But he was not a Raja, and the hill chiefs regarded him as nothing more than a demagogue, and do not seem to have thought much of his organisation and power. Some of them even regarded him as an upstart and one of them went so far as to have demanded from him his favourite elephant together with some other of the choicest presents brought to him by one of his wealthiest and most zealous followers. The Guru was disgusted with the apathy of the hill chiefs and became exasperated at the insults and threats of the Raja of Bilaspur to whom he had refused to deliver up the presents above referred to. The Guru made up his mind to coerce these chieftains into submission, and in order to bring them to their senses he let loose his followers upon them. The Sikhs who had already tasted the joys of plunder ransacked the territories of the impotent but insolent chiefs, and reduced their subjects to a state of starvation by carrying away everything they could lay their hands upon.[1]

Being exasperated, the Rajas made a grand alliance, and Bheem Chand of Bilaspur, Kirpal Chand Katoch, Kesari Chand of Jassowa, Sukhdayal of Jasrotah, Hari Chand of Nalagarh, Prithi Chand of Dadwala and Fateh Shah of Srinagar attacked the Guru with an

---

1. *Panth Prakash.*

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

army of ten thousand men. The Guru came forward to meet them at the head of two thousand chosen warriors, and a severe action was fought near the village of Bhangani. The Guru has himself described the battle in very spirited verse. The five hundred Afghans who formed a part of his cavalry, thinking it hopeless for the Guru to defeat the large army of the Rajas, deserted him just on the eve of the battle. But Syed Buddhoo Shah, the Chief of Sadhowra at whose recommendation the Guru had taken the Afghans into his service, hearing of this desertion, hastened to the Guru's help with a force of two thousand men and with this timely aid the Guru won a complete victory over the allied Rajas. After this victory the Guru returned in triumph to the fort at Pownta, held a great Darbar there, and in honour of this, his first victory, he bestowed robes of honour upon his generals. Syed Budhoo Shah whose timely help had contributed so much to the victory and whose own son had fallen in the action, received a comb and one-half of the Guru's own turban together with a certificate of honour, and the author of the *Panth Prakash* says that all these things are still presented as sacred relics by the descendants of the Syed. After this the Guru built four new forts, *viz*, Lohgarh, Anandgarh, Phoolgarh and Fatehgarh, and began to increase his military resources.

When the Rajas saw the increasing power of the Guru and realised what stuff he

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

was made of, they began to regard his propaganda with the seriousness it deserved, and lost no more time in defying his counsels, and hastened to make an offensive and defensive alliance with him. The time had not yet come for them to take the offensive but they did not hesitate any longer in taking the position which is the first to be taken by all subject people entering upon a struggle for liberty. The Rajas, supported by the Guru, at once took up the course of passive resistance, and refused to send up their yearly tribute to the Imperial Exchequer. Aurangzeb was busy in the Deccan subduing the little but golden principality of Golcunda. The Rajas were, therefore, not interfered with for many years. As soon, however, as Aurangzeb was free, and returned to Delhi, he ordered an expedition against them and sent a large army under the command of Miyan Khan, Alif Khan and Zulfikar Khan to realise the arrears from the rebellious chiefs. A bloody battle, described[1] in stirring verse by Guru Govind Singh in his *Vichitra Natak*, was fought near Nadaun in which the Rajas, with the help of the Khalsa, inflicted a severe defeat on the imperial troops This defeat provoked Dilawar Khan, the Governor of Kangra, and he attacked the Rajas in person with a large force, while he sent his

---

1. These descriptions are of course not given in the spirit and style of a historian, the Guru's object being to rouse military spirit by his stirring verse rather than record history.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

son Rustam Khan with a strong detachment to punish the Guru for aiding the Rajas. Rustam Khan lay encamped outside Anandpur when it rained so heavily one night that the neighbouring ravine was over-flooded and carried away large numbers of the imperial troops and spread a panic among the rest. The result was that Rustam Khan had to beat a hasty retreat. The grateful Sikhs up to this day call the ravine by the name of *Himayati Nullah* or the helpful brook.

When the news of these disasters reached Aurangzeb he was beside himself with rage and sent his heir-apparent, Prince Muazzim, to restore order in the Punjab and realise the imperial dues from the rebellious Rajas.

The Prince himself took his position at Lahore, and sent an expedition under Mirza Beg to chastise the Guru and the Rajas. The expedition ended in disaster, to the great disappointment and indignation of the Prince who now made up his mind to take the field in person.[1] Nand Lal, Private Secretary to the Prince, was, however, a follower of the Guru. He spoke to the Prince in glowing terms of the great virtues and lofty character of the Sikh leader, and prevailed upon him to give up all idea of molesting the holy man.

---

1. See Cunningham, p. 76 (note), and Panth Prakash.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

The Guru thus escaped without any harm but the Rajas were taught a severe lesson by Mirza Beg, the Imperial General. He inflicted upon them defeat after defeat, gave up their country to plunder, set fire to villages, took hundreds of prisoners, and in order to make an example of them had them shaved clean, and their faces blackened, seated them on donkeys and made an exhibition of them throughout the disturbed area. Having received such a severe lesson from the imperial troops, the Rajas found out that it was much too dangerous to provoke the wrath of Aurangzeb and defy his authority. They were extremely demoralised and gave up all hope of fighting their way out to freedom. They paid their arrears into the royal treasury and made abject apologies for their deviation from the path of loyalty.

The Guru, thanks to the diplomacy of Nand Lal, had got some recess during which he recouped his power and strengthened his resources. He appealed to the Rajas again to gird up their loins, and strike a blow for their national freedom, but the lesson they had lately been taught by Mirza Beg was yet too fresh in their minds. They refused to listen to the Guru's counsels and remained unshaken in their allegiance to the Government of Delhi. The Guru renewed the same tactics and once more let loose his followers upon their territories. The result was that the Sikhs began to carry fire and sword into their possessions,

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

and carried away everything they could lay their hands upon. The Rajas were exasperated once more, and formed a second coalition against the Guru, and attacked him with a force of twenty thousand soldiers. The Guru had only 8,000 men in the fort of Anandpur at the time but he succeeded in repulsing the combined forces of the Rajas with great slaughter.[1] The Rajas were now helpless and began to despair of themselves. They prepared a memorial and sent it to the Emperor stating in most abject and piteous terms that the Guru had adopted the royal insignia and called himself the true king, that thousands of fanatical followers were daily flocking to his flag, that they themselves had failed to break his power, and that, elated with victory, he was daily growing more insolent and dangerous, that he defied the authority of His Imperial Majesty and was encouraging his ignorant followers by holding forth to them the hopes that time was coming when His Majesty's Government would fall to the dust and the Khalsa would be the supreme ruler in the land. The Emperor was alarmed on receiving this petition, and at once issued orders to the governor of Sirhind to take the field personally against the Guru and teach him a severe lesson. The Governor of Sirhind, consequently, attacked the Guru with a large

---

1. The Guru had taken possession of a considerable part of the hill territories and his sway extended in the plains up to Rupar.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

force and the allied armies of the Rajas also joined in the attack.[1] The Guru summoned all his resources and came out to meet the imperial army. A great battle was fought at Kirtipur in 1701 A.D. The Guru's troops behaved like heroes and fought most desperately, but they were fighting against fearful odds. After two days of desperate fighting the Sikhs were driven back, and the Guru had to take refuge in the fort of Anandpur where he shut himself up. The imperial army laid siege to the fort and cut off all communication from without.[2]

Khawaja Muhammad and Nahar Khan, the commanders of the Imperial troops, sent a messenger to the Guru, reminding him that he had not the paltry and undisciplined troops of petty hill-chiefs to contend with, but was pitted against the invincible armies of the great Moghul, "the King of Kings, the asylum of the poor, the protector of the world, Alamgir Aurangzeb," that it was madness for him to attempt impossibilities, that it would be better for him to cease hostilities, make immediate submission, renounce his infidelity and embrace the Islamic faith.

---

1. Buti Shah says that 22 Rajas joined the Governors of Sirhind and Lahore in the attack upon the Guru.

2. Panth Prakash gives an account of several other battles with the Imperial troops which the Guru won before being driven to straits in the fortress of Anandpur Makhowal.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

The Guru's youthful son, Ajit Singh, who sat by, drew his scimitar and exclaimed in a rage to the bearer of the message: "Utter one word more and I will smite your head from your body and cut you to pieces, for daring to address our chief with such insolence."[1] Needless to say that the blood of the envoy boiled with rage, and he returned to the imperial camp stung to the quick by this defiance.

The Guru was fighting for a principle and those who fight for principles do not measure the chances of success or failure. Submission to the Moghul army would have meant the submission of high principles to brute force, and the acquiescence of the Guru to the perpetuation of his nation's slavery. The Guru, therefore, did not think it necessary to contradict his son and conciliate the tyrant's envoy. He shut himself up in the fort and kept up a defensive attitude returning the enemy's fire from the guns which he had mounted on the walls of the fortress.[2] The siege continued without the least relaxation in the vigilance of the besiegers. The provisions

---

1. According to Cunningham and Latif this incident occurred at Chamkaur, but I think the Panth Prakash is right in putting it at Anandpur. The nature of the struggle at Chamkaur hardly admitted of any negotiations.

2. Two of the guns used in this siege by the Guru are preserved in the Lahore Museum.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

soon began to run short and the garrison began to implore the Guru to make his submission for the time being, retire safely to a position of advantage and after recouping his resources resume hostilities with greater activity and success. The imperialists had promised safe conduct in case of capitulation and the Sikhs who were already dying of hunger entreated the Guru to avail of this offer of the besiegers The Guru made the same reply to them. He told them how degrading it would be to submit to the *Mlechhas*, and tried to encourage them in every way The tyrants, moreover, he said, seldom keep their promises, and the Khalsa had given them too much provocation to expect any generosity at their hands, and if they surrendered the fort they would fall by the swords of the Moghuls. He entreated his Sikhs to trust in him and in God, and there would be every chance of their being reinforced and of repulsing the imperialists from their gates. To convince his followers of the hollowness of Moghul promises he ordered some rags, broken saddles, old shoes and such other things to be packed up in bundles and carried out on mules and packhorses to make a show that the Sikhs were retiring with their baggage. As soon as the Moghul army saw the cavalcade they fell upon it and carried away every packet that they could lay their hands upon[1]. The Sikhs were over whelmed by despair, and finding agonising

1. MS. British Museum. Or. 187.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

death by starvation staring them in the face, sought refuge in desertion. The Guru was soon left with only 45 of his most faithful followers.[1]

They waited and waited, but it seems that the Sikhs outside were either too terror-stricken or had no leader to organise them and bring them to the aid of the besieged. The provisions in the meantime were totally exhausted and the Guru had now no alternative but to leave the fort at any risk. Taking advantage of the dark night the Guru left the fort with his family and the little devoted band of his followers, and made the best of his way to the fortress of Chamkaur. Alarm was, however, soon raised and a detachment headed by Khawja Muhammad and Nahar Khan themselves pursued the Guru to that fortress. "The devoted little band fought to the last. The two eldest sons of the Guru, Ajit Singh and Jojhar Singh, with their mother Sundari, were slain before his eyes. The Guru himself behaved with great bravery, killing with his own hand Nahar Khan, and wounding the other, Khawja Muhammad."[2]

---

1. The Guru has left on record a powerful curse pronounced by him on the deserters. These deserters when they reached their homes in the plains were severely punished by the Government. The Guru utilized this fact for a homily on loyalty to one's spiritual guide. See *Vichitra Natak*, Chapter XIII.

2. Latif, p. 265.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

The struggle though short must have been terrible. Of the forty-five disciples who had accompanied the Guru, only five succeeded besides himself in gaining entrance into the fortress,[1] where they shut themselves up. But the place could not be expected to give them a safe refuge for any long time. It was after all a brick-built small fortress and could be easily destroyed or set on fire. Fatigued and hungry, as the Guru and his five surviving Sikhs were, they resolved upon a desperate course, and when the Moghuls were yet busy in disposing off their dead, the Guru caused a hole to be made in one of the walls and in the darkness of the night he and his five followers escaped one by one running in different directions.[2] The Guru now made the best of his way to the neighbouring woods, and passed the day in the forest, and set out again at night on his weary wandering. He reached

---

1. According to Latif and Cunningham the battle took place after the Guru had shut himself up in the fortress. The story of *Panth Prakash*, given in the text, seems, however, to be more probable, *viz.*, that the Guru was overtaken before effecting his entrance into the fortress.

2. The author of the *Panth Prakash* says that the Guru ordered four of his followers to remain in the fortress and keep up a constant fire from their muskets to beguile the Moghuls, while the Guru escaped with two or three faithful followers. The fortress was taken the following morning and the four Sikhs left in charge of it fell sword in hand, fighting to the last man.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the small town of Machhiawara towards the morning and hid himself in a big garden in the east of the town. The garden belonged to two Rohilla Pathans, named Ghani Khan and Nabi Khan. They suddenly turned up there and were struck with amazement and terror on finding Govind Singh on their land. Their cupidity was aroused and for a moment they thought of winning wealth and honour by betraying him to the Government. But the Guru had several times purchased horses from them and had always treated them with the greatest kindness. Humanity and gratitude soon prevailed and they took the Guru under their protection. The Guru changed his dress and assumed the disguise of a Muhammadan Saint, while Ghani Khan and Nabi Khan declared that he was their Pir and was on a visit to them from the celebrated shrine of Uchch.[1]

The Guru next took shelter with Qazi Pir Muhammad of Solah with whom he had read Persian and studied the Koran in his earlier days, and three of the Sikhs who had escaped with him from the fortress of Chamkaur and had been wandering in Muhammadan garb in anxious search of the Guru, also came up and were glad to find their Guru alive and

---

1. The Pirs of Uchch in the district of Multan keep long beards and do not cut their hair, so that the Guru with his hair down must have made an ideal Pir.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

in safe hands. But the Guru knew that he could not wait there long with safety, and as soon as his Sikhs arrived he made up his mind to start for Malwa. To make the disguise complete, he seated himself in an improvished palanquin like the Pirs of Uchch, which his followers carried on their shoulders, and set out for the province of Malwa. They had not gone far when the enemy's soldiers were upon them. Resistance was out of the question. Safety lay in diplomacy, and the palki-bearers, when seized and questioned, coolly said that they were the servants of the Pir Sahib who was on a tour visiting his followers. Rumours had got afloat that Govind was in hiding in Mohammadan disguise, but the Pirs of Uchch were held in such reverence and awe, that the very possibility of their captive's identity with one of them proved the safety of Govind. The commander of the Moghul band, however, insisted that if the occupant of the palanquin was really the Pir of Uchch, he should condescend to dine with him and confer upon him the merit of having entertained such a great saint. The Guru readily declared his willingness, and, according to some accounts, dined on the same table with his Muhammadan captors.[1]

1. This is Cunningham's version and Kanahya Lal agrees with him. Syed Muhammad Latif, however, makes no mention of it, and the author of *Panth Prakash* while saying that his Sikhs dined with the Moslems, does not make it clear if the Guru also joined them. One account (Ms. Or. 187) says that the

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

After this hair-breadth escape the Guru left for Malwa.[1] He was pursued and overtaken in the midst of the barren desert lying around the town of Muktsar. Some of his followers had, however, rallied round him and the Moghul Army distressed by heat and scarcity of water was compelled to retire.[2] In commemoration of the Sikhs who fell in this action, the Guru built a tank there and called it Muktsar or the tank of salvation from which the present town of Muktsar derives its name.

The Guru had now lost all his children and was in a state of great dejection. The armies of Aurangzeb, moreover, were too vigilant and active to allow any scope for the realisation of his great aims. Consequently

---

Sikhs declared that their Pir was fasting and did not take anything but a grain of barley morning and evening. Some say that the Sikhs purified their food by touching it with a dagger, others that they read a text from the *Granth* before they partook of it.

1. Malwa here does not refer to the country generally and properly called by this name. In the Punjab the name is applied to the district of Ferozepore and a part of the Sikh State of Patiala.

2. Latif, following Macgregor probably, puts the Guru's army at 12,000 and the Moghul army at 7,000. *Panth Prakash*, as well as Sohan Lal says only about forty men fought on the Guru's side, and this seems to be the truth, as otherwise the Guru would not have retired from military life with such a large army at his disposal and after such a great victory.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

he established himself at a place half-way between Hansee and Ferozepore which he called *Damdama* or a breathing place and stopped there for about a year passing his time in teaching his followers and compiling the *Dasam Granth*. While here, he received a letter from Aurangzeb requiring his presence at Delhi He replied in a long epistle couched in spirited Persian verse stating all the wrongs that had been done to him and justifying his recourse to the sword as the ultimate remedy.[1] It seems that Aurengzeb, in his letter to the Guru, had sworn by the Koran to treat him honourably, but the Guru tells him plainly in his reply that he does not care a rap for the wily Moghul's oaths. Govind also rebuked the Emperor for his bigotry and oppression and threatened him with the vengeance which the Khalsa would one day take upon him. Aurangzeb summoned him once more, and according to some historians the Guru had set out to meet him when the aged monarch died. After Aurangzeb's death, Bahadur Shah is said to have conferred upon him a command in the

---

1. A line in the epistle says.—

Chunkar az hamah hilate dar guzasht,

Hala last burdan ba shamshir dast.

"When all remedies have failed, it is lawful to lay one's hand on the sword." These remedies unfortunately were not many in Aurangzeb's time, there being no recognised system of ventilating popular grievances.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

imperial army and according to Cunningham, Latif and *Panth Prakash*, etc.,[1] he actually accompanied the Emperor to the Deccan.[2] The Guru passed his time in peace in the Deccan until he was stabbed by his two Pathan proteges whose father[3] had been killed by him.

---

1. Munshi Sohan Lal also supports this view. All these authorities seem to have followed Khafi Khan.

2. Buti Shah says that Govind went to the Deccan because he was dejected and probably wanted a change, and Malcolm holds the same view. Trumpp is uncertain and Kanahya Lal makes no mention of the service. The words of Malcolm are very suggestive. "When we consider," says he, "the enthusiastic ardour of his mind, his active habits, his valour and the insatiable thirst of revenge which he had cherished through life against the murderer of his father and the oppressors of his sect, we cannot think, when that leading passion of his mind must have been increased by the massacre of his children and the death and mutilation of his most attached followers, that he would have remained inactive, much less that he would have sunk into a servant of that Government against which he had been in constant rebellion. Nor is it likely that such a leader as Guru Govind could ever have been trusted by a Muhammadan prince." Nor can the service theory be reconciled with the Guru's commission of Bunda to the leadership of the Punjab and his doings there.

3. Cunningham, Macgregor and several others give this version. Trumpp following *Sikhan de Raj di Vithya* says one of the boys was a grandson of Payanda killed by Govind's grandfather. The priests at Naderh told the same story to Cunningham.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

The boys were caught but pardoned, as the Guru said that they also had after all simply tried to revenge their father's death.[1] His wound was sewn up and he recovered but shortly after, while he was testing a strong bow, it burst open again. The Guru bled profusely and died at Naderh a town on the Godavri, now called Abchalanagar, towards the end of 1708 A.D. His dying injunctions to his followers were to be firm and resolute. He assured them that whenever five Sikhs would be assembled there he would himself be.

Though he did not live to see his high aims accomplished, Guru Govind's labours were not lost. Though he did not actually break the shackles that bound his nation he had set their souls free, and filled their hearts with a lofty longing for freedom and ascendancy. He had broken the charm of sanctity attached to the Lord of Delhi,[2] and destroyed the awe and terror inspired by the Moslem tyranny. Govind had seen what was yet vital in the Hindu race "and he relumed it with Promethean fire." He had taken up sparrows and had taught them to hunt down

---

1. It is not difficult to conceive how the Guru must have envied the Pathan boy's luck. His own father's death practically still remained unavenged.

2. *Ishwaro va Dillishwaro va*, "the Lord of Delhi is as great as God" had long been a maxim with the terrified Hindus.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

imperial hawks. He was the first Indian leader who taught democratical principles and made his followers regard each other as Bhai[1] or brother, and act by *Gurmata* or general counsels. He taught them to regard themselves as the chosen of the Lord, destined to crush tyranny and oppression, and look upon themselves as the future rulers of their land. He did not appoint any successor, not only because his own sons were all dead, but because perhaps he anticipated the abuses of the office if it fell into unworthy hands. He put an end to apostolic succession and, as stated above, enjoined upon his Sikhs to look upon the Granth as their only Guru in the future. He appointed no successor but Sikhs were supposed to look upon as their Guru the Granth (the volume containing the hymns composed by some of his predecessors). The Sikhs accordingly hold the book in great reverence and bow before it as the Sanatanist Hindus bow before their idols and similarly when bowing throw coins before it. Some uncharitable critics have charged the Sikhs with bibliolatory. I have often seen even the most modern Sikhs prostrating themselves at full length before the book at much inconvenience when wearing trousers of European cut.

---

1. In view of the political power, which the Sikhs later acquired, every Sikh expects to be called a Sardar and the word Bhai is now confined to denote a Sikh priest or members of a family whose ancestors at one time held priestly offices.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Till lately, the Granth was worshipped with bells and candles like images in Hindu temples, and full *arti* was performed. He had however, chosen one Banda Bairagi to carry on his work as a temporal leader, and we must now follow the fortunes of the Khalsa under the leadership of this great man.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER XII

Sikh Conquests under Banda

(1708-1716)

Banda was born in 1670 A.D. at Rajowri, a village in the little hill State of Poonch, a feudatory of His Highness of Jammu and Kashmir. His original name was Lachhman Dev. His father's name was Ram Dev and he was a Rajput of the Dogra tribe. In his earlier days Lachhman Dev was very fond of hunting, but one day he killed a doe, and as he cut her open, two little cubs came out alive and breathed their last in a few minutes before his very eyes. Lachhman Dev was so touched with the sight that he not only gave up hunting but renounced the world, became a *Bairagi* receiving the new name of Madho Das,[1] and joined a party of Sadhus and set off with them on a tour of pilgrimage. In course of time he attained great fame for his learning, piety and miraculous powers with which the

---

1. Although Banda's military operations against the Moghul Government were so serious that the Emperor had to take the field against him in person, the accounts of his doings given by English historians are extremely meagre. I have, therefore, dwelt upon his achievements at greater length than might seem necessary for the purposes of this work.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

people of those days readily invested anyone endowed with extraordinary attainments like Banda. He now ceased wandering and settled in princely fashion in the little quiet village of Naderh situated on the banks of the Godawari in Hyderabad State.

It was here that the meeting between him and Guru Govind Singh took place in 1708 A.D. The Guru, while travelling in the Deccan, happened to halt at Naderh, and hearing great deal about the ascetic went to see him. He at once found out what stuff the Bairagi was made of, and the Guru fixed upon him as the future leader of the Khalsa who would carry out his great designs. An intimate friendship soon grew up between them, and the persuasive eloquence and religious zeal of the Guru made such a deep impression on the mind of Madho Das that he became a disciple of the Guru, called himself his *banda* or slave, and threw himself entirely at his service. The Guru was exceedingly pleased at this triumph and at once accepted the offer of Madho Das's services. The Guru had told him all about his aims and ambitions, his sufferings and disasters. He now appealed to his new disciple to take up his work, avenge the blood of his father and his innocent children, and strike a blow at the Moghul despotism and emancipate his race from the yoke of thraldom.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

He gave him a sword and five arrows from his own quiver and enjoined upon him the following five commandments :—

(1) Do not approach a woman, but lead a life of chastity and celibacy.[1]

(2) Always think the truth, speak the truth and act the truth.

(3) Regard youself as a servant of the Khalsa and always act in accordance with its wishes

(4) Do not try to found any sect of your own.

(5) Do not let victories elate you or kingly pride turn your head.

Banda received the sword and arrows with profound reverence and solemnly promised to obey the commands of the Guru. The Guru gave him a letter addressed to the Sikhs of the Punjab calling upon all to acknowledge Banda as their leader and fight under his flag. He also gave him a drum and

---

1. The Guru attached great importance to a continent life which he had himself adopted before entering upon his warlike career. His second wife, Sahib Devan, showed an anxiety for a child but the Guru consoled her by saying that the whole Khalsa would be as a child unto her. Every Sikh accordingly is told at the time of baptism that henceforth his caste will be Sodhi, (Govind's caste) and his parents Govind Singh and Sahib Devan.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

a banner of his own, and putting twenty-five of his chosen followers at his service he sent him to the Punjab to carry on the work which he had undertaken and left unaccomplished.

When Banda reached the Punjab, thousands of Sikhs flocked to him, ready to fight and die under his banner.[1] The army which now assembled under the command of Banda consisted of three classes of persons.

The first class comprised the true and loyal Sikhs who had sat at the feet of Guru Govind himself and had been touched by the Promethean fire which animated the great pontiff himself. They rallied round Banda in a spirit of devotion and self-sacrifice to carry on the crusade against the enemies of their race and religion. They had no booty, no self-aggrandisement, as their object. On the contrary, hundreds sold all their little belongings, purchased arms, and flocked to the new leader with a fixed determination either to win the fight or to suffer martyrdom.

The second class consisted of mercenaries who had been recruited and sent on to Banda by such chieftains, as Ram Singh and Tilok Singh of the Phool family, who, not being quite sanguine about the success of the new movement, did not like to run the risk of

---

1. According to Muhammad Qasim and Khafi Khan, people believed Banda to be an incarnation of Guru Govind Singh.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

losing court favour and their possessions, and could not venture to join personally the army of Banda. They secretly paid for the arms and accoutrements of large bodies of troops and keeping themselves in the background continued to help the movement in a clandestine way

The third class was entirely composed of the irregulars who were attracted to Banda by the love of booty and plunder. They were professional robbers and dacoits, men of reckless daring, who hailed the movement as a golden opportunity offering prospects of plundering cities and towns instead of solitary wayfarers or caravans of merchants.

By the time Banda reached the precincts of Sarhind, he had collected a large army.[1] His first object was to take and destroy that town to avenge the blood of the infant sons of Guru Govind Singh who had been brutally put to death there.

When he arrived at the town of Kythal, report was brought him that a large amount of treasure was being taken to Delhi and that the guard in charge of the treasure had halted at the village of Bhoona. He at once fell

---

1. According to Khafi Khan in 2 or 3 months, 4,000 horsemen and seven or eight thousand foot joined him and their number soon reached 8 or 9 thousand and rose at last to 40,000.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

upon them, cut them to pieces and carried away every farthing of the money, the whole of which was at once distributed among his troops to their great joy and encouragement. The town of Kythal was given to plunder after which Banda advanced upon Samana, the native village of Jalal-ud-Din, the executioner, by whom Tegh Bahadur had been put to death. The town was looted and Muhammadans to the number of 10,000 were put to death.[1] The towns of Ghuram, Thaska, Ambala, Kunjpur, Mustafabad and Kapuri,[2] were plundered, and Muslim officers punished for their tyranny and oppression. Sadhora was the next to fall. The Moslems of the town took refuge in the mansion af the Syeds but Banda gave them no quarters and all were mercilessly put to the sword.

The place still exists and is known as *Qatlgarhi* or the Slaughter House. Banda next took possession of the fort of Mukhlispur and named it Lohgarh. Chhat and Banur, the Moslems of which attracted Banda's notice by their bigotry and slaughter of cows, were

---

1. *Banda Bahadur.*

2. Kapuri is a village four miles from Sadhowra in the Amballa district. The Hakim of this place was a tyrant and libertine of the worst type. There was hardly a family in the town whose honour had not been destroyed by his lust. His name was Kadam-ud-Din Khan.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the next to fall and their Moslem inhabitants were as usual put to the sword.

Small as these victories were, they served to encourage the followers of Banda and attracted thousands to his flag by the time he advanced upon Sarhind. It was here that the infant sons of the Guru had been brutally done to death, and the place represented to the minds of the Sikhs all that was mean and hateful, and the faithful followers of Govind burnt with longing for an opportunity to wreak their vengeance upon the murderous town. It was looked upon as a sacred duty to take part in the coming battle of Sarhind, and the desire for martyrdom had brought thousands from Majha and Malwa to join in the attack. Thousands had also been attracted by the prospect of plunder, as Sarhind, being the headquarters of the province of that name, promised to provide a rich booty to the victors.

The fomous battle was fought on the 30th of May 1710 A.D.[1] Wazir Khan, the Governor, assisted by Sher Muhammad and Khawja Ali of Maler Kotla led his troops in person. He had a number of field guns, Zamburaks and a long line of elephants. Banda, on the other hand, had no guns or elephants and not even a sufficient supply of good

---

1. Khafi Khan gives a detailed and vivid account of the battle.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

horses. As soon as the battle began and the Moghul artillery opened fire, the dacoits and robbers whom the love of booty had brought together took to their heels, leaving the faithful Sikhs alone to fight out the battle. Fateh Singh, Karm Singh, Dharm Singh and Ali Singh commanded the contingent from Malwa and Baj Singh and Binod Singh led those of Majha. Banda himself fought like a true Rajput in the forefront of his army. Religious zeal triumphed over the cannon and superior numbers of the Moghuls. Wazir Khan himself was slain with his Diwan. The city was given to plunder and the Muhammadans were ruthlessly massacred without any distinction of sex or age.[1]

The plunder of Sarhind continued for three days. On the fourth day it was stopped

---

1. They butchered, bayoneted, strangled, hanged, shot down, hacked to pieces and burnt alive every Muhammadan in the place. Nor was this all. The dead, too, were made to contribute their share towards gratifying the rage of these voracious vampires..The sanctity of the graveyard was violated, and corpses were exhumed, hewn to pieces and exposed as carrion, etc." Latif's *History of the Punjab.*

This seems to be much exaggerated. The mausoleum of Ahmad Shah, the most magnificent of all such buildings, still stands as it did before the battle and is I think sufficient evidence of the exaggeration in Latif's statement above, which nevertheless, is corroborated by Khafi Khan who adds that even wombs of pregnant women were ripped open and babies cut to pieces.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

by order. Baj Singh,[1] the commander of Majha Singhs was appointed Governor of Sarhind with Ali Singh, the leader of Malwa Singhs, as his Naib.

Fateh Singh was appointed Governor of Samana and Ram Singh, a brother of Baj Singh, the Governor of Thaneswar jointly with Baba Binod Singh. The Moslem Hakims of all the 28 Parganas of Sarhind were replaced by Hindus and most of the country between the Sutlej and the Jamuna passed into the hands of the Sikhs.

Banda was now looked upon as the champion of Hinduism[2] and marched eastward

1. Baj Singh, a jat of Ball caste and a native of Mir Pur Patti in Amritsar (?) district, was a disciple of Govind Singh whom he had accompanied to the Deccan. He was one of those sent by Govind as advisers with Banda. He accompanied Banda throughout his wars with his brothers Ram Singh, Sham Singh and Kuber Singh and lastly he was one of those who suffered martyrdom with Banda at Delhi in 1716 A. D. His name is mentioned by Muhammad Qasim as Baz Singh. See *Ibrat Nama* f. 29. *In Tarikhi-Muhamad Shahi* he is called Bakht Singh.

2. He believed himself and was regarded by the Hindus as the scourage of Muhammadans sent by God to punish them for their crimes. Oppressed Hindus resorted to him for help which was willingly and efficiently given, a fact which had a great influence in promoting the growth of the Sikh power. The slayers of kine were given no quarters and this alone was sufficient to win over the sympathies of the whole Hindu race. His innovations might also be ascribed to the same motive.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

on receiving a complaint from the Hindus of Dev Band who were being cruelly treated by Jalal-ud-Din, the Hakim of Jalalabad.[1] He fell upon Saharanpur[2] which was deserted by its Hakim, Ali Mohammad, and was sacked by the Sikhs. His attention was next drawn to Behat,[3] the *Peerzadas* of which seemed to take particular pleasure in slaughtering cows. Needless to say that the place was looted and the family building and the town destroyed. Before the Sikhs reached Jalalabad they reduced every town and village that fell on the way, most important of which were Ambeta and Nanauta. An account of the battle of Nanauta is reproduced in the *Calcutta Review*[4] from the diary of one Muhammad Zafar-ud-Din who was an eye-witness to the whole affair. Three hundred Shaikhzadas were killed in one quarter of the town which was reduced to ruins and is still known as "Phoota Shyhr" or the Ruined Town.[5] Jallalabad was reached next and was besieged. The Afghans fought bravely and the rainy season having set in and the country around being exhausted,

---

1. Twenty miles from Saharanpur, now in Muzaffarnagar district.

2. Spelt Sarangpur by Khafi Khan.

3. 17 Miles from Saharanpur.

4. Vol. LX. The date of the battle according to the diary was July 11, 1710 A.D. (See Banda Bahadur).

5. Banda Bahadur.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Banda gave up the siege[1]. He next took Karnal and reduced the whole country up to Panipat.[2] The Sikhs were now in the province of Delhi proper and the reports of their ravages were daily pouring in from all sides. They were now supreme from Sarhind to Panipat and "there was no nobleman daring enough to march from Delhi against them. Nizam-ul-Mulk Asif-ud-Daula Asad Khan,[3] the Governor of the Capital, was greatly alarmed and behaved in a most pusillanimous manner, and the inhabitants were seized with terror and fled for shelter with their families to the eastern provinces."[4]

The Emperor was away. The generals and noblemen were all afraid of Banda. The road from Panipat to Delhi lay open but somehow the Sikhs did not venture further.[5] It might have been due to their fear of the Emperor who had been alarmed

---

1. Khafi Khan says Banda went to Sultanpore after this.

2. *Risala-i-Nanak Shah.*

3. He simply wrote alarming letters to the King who was away reducing the Rajputs.

4. Iradat Khan, as quoted by Latif.

5. Gyan Singh, the author of *Panth Prakash*, laments the laziness of the Sikhs in not attacking Delhi which seemed at this time to be an easy prey.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

by the reports[1] of the Sikh aggression and was hastening back.[2] The Emperor did not even enter his capital to take breath after his southern successes but marched straight on towards Sarhind to punish the Sikhs. The vanguard of the Imperial army led by Mahabat Khan Sipahsalar, and Feroz Khan Mewati[3] came into collision with the troops of Ram Singh and Binod Singh, the deputies of Banda in Thaneswar and Trawari. A battle was fought on the 10th of November 1710 A.D. at Aminabad, a village situated on the royal road, between Thaneswar and Trawari. The Sikhs were defeated with great slaughter. Even the wounded and the dying were not spared and were hanged by their hair.[4] on the trees with other prisoners of war. The arrival of the Imperial troops had once more inspired

---

1. Sent by Asad Khan from Delhi and by various *Waqa Nawises e.g.*, Taj Din Diwan Buotat, Hafiz Khan Diwan, Hasan Riza Kotwal, Fakhar-ud-Din Bakshi, Muhammad Tahir and Darwesh Muhammad Qazi *Tarikhi Muhammad Shahi.*

2. Thousands who had suffered at the hands of Banda waited upon the king at Ajmer telling their piteous tales. "If Bahadur Shah had not quitted the Dekhan which he did in 1710 there is reason to think the whole of Hindustan would have been subdued by these merciless invaders."—Malcolm.

3. According to Khafi Khan, Muhammad Amin Khan and Rustamdil Khan assisted by Churamani Jat.

4. Muhammad Qasim—*Ibrat Nama* and *Tarikh-i-Farrukh Siyar.*

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the demoralised Moghul Governor with courage. Shams Khan, the Foujdar or Governor of Jullundur Doab, who had fallen upon a section of the Sikh army with a fanatical army of one hundred thousand, defeated them at Rahon, near Sultanpore. (Khafi Khan).[1]

Banda took up his position in the fort of Lohgarh[2] which stood on a steep hill a few

---

1. In "*Banda Bahadur*," published by Chief Khalsa Diwan, Banda is represented as having taken no part personally in any of the battles fought after the fall of Sarhind. The reasons given for this view are, however, far from convincing in face of overwhelming evidence of contemporary writers confirming his presence in some battles. It does not, moreover, seem probable that Banda would sit enjoying himself in the fort of Lohgarh complacently watching the loss of Karnal. On the other hand it seems very unlikely that Banda should have been beaten by such men as Mahabat Khan or Feroz Khan at Amingarh or by Shams Khan at Rahon. It seems more reasonable to suppose that the Sikhs were taken by surprise and beaten at both places before Banda could arrive in time. They did not anticipate that the Emperor would return so hastily as he did. They despised the local officers as none had dared to stand in their way. They were, therefore, scattered all over the Punjab up to the Ravi and the hills and fighting in detachments were beaten by the imperialists.

2, The Sikh name of Mukhlispore. Iradat Khan, followed by Latif and some others, calls it the fort of Daber. In *Maasir-al-Umara* (p. 515, Vol. II, it is called Lohgarh.)

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

miles from Sadhoura.[1] The fort was besieged by the Imperial army under the direct command of the emperor who had joined the expedition with his four sons.[2] The following account of the siege given by Iradat Khan, who was an eye-witness of the whole scene will be found interesting.

The Emperor's orders to his *Omerahs* were to the effect that they were not to attack the Sikhs in their strong posts, under any pretence, but were to use every means in their power to induce them to sally forth from the forts. After the contending parties had remained inactive for some days, Khan-i-Khanan sallied forth with a number of his troops to reconnoitre his adversary's position.

When, however, he had arrived within cannon-shot of their position, the enemy opened fire on the royal troops, while their musketeers and archers who occupied some of the surrounding elevations, volleyed in their messages of death in quick succession.

---

1. There is no trace of the fort now but its site is still marked by a mound on the hill surrounded by two mountain streams. The only other relic is a small pond on the top of the mound which is perhaps a remnant of the tank which formed the water supply of the garrison.—"*Banda Bahadur.*"

2. Following, in this, the example of Aurangzeb who towards the end of his reign appered at the siege of every fort belonging to the Kafirs, in order to win merit in a religious war"—Iradat Khan.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

The imperial troops could no longer be held in check. The order was given to advance to the attack. Khan-i-Khanan dismounted from his horse and led his troops on foot up the most difficult heights, driving the enemy from them with great slaughter. This scene passing within sight of the royal camps, the chiefs and soldiers, emulous of glory, waited not for orders, but hastened to join the attack in great numbers, while the emperor and the four princes who accompanied him were eager spectators of the whole scene. The imperial troops carried all before them, driving the enemy from the heights surrounding the fortress. The Sikhs were compelled to retreat to the central fort which had only narrow approaches, difficult of access to recommend it without affording good means of resistance. The defenders fought desperately but would have been completely annihilated, had not the darkness of night given them a further reprieve by rendering friends and foes undistinguishable to each other. The attack was renewed about dawn and the fort taken after a short struggle. The Sikh chieftain effected his escape during the night by a narrow path leading from the fort to the hills, which had escaped the general's notice, and retreated into the wildest parts of the snowy range of the Himalayas. The Guru (Banda) knew well how to disguise himself and so dexterous was he in this accomplishment, that his most intimate acquaintances were unable to recognise

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

him when he wished to evade detection.[1] When he wished to be known he appeared as a prince in the richest and most showy garments. When secrecy was his object, he generally took the guise of a *jogi* or *Sanniassi*.[2]

To preclude the possibility of a pursuit Banda had accepted the loyal offer of a devoted servant, named Gulaboo[3] who bore an exact likeness to him in features, and had left him behind to personate him.[4] Khan-i-Knanan entered the fort in triumph and was transported with joy to find "Banda" among the prisoners of war. He was, however, soon disillusioned to the Emperor's great disappoint-

---

1. He seems to have been indeed as great an expert in this art as Sivaji himself and perhaps greater inasmuch as he was regarded by his followers as well as enemies a sorcerer who could fly into the air at will. Therefore when he was finally captured, he was tied to a Moghul nobleman and confined in an iron cage in which he was carried to Delhi.

2. It is a free translation of Iradat Khan given in Latif's history.

3. When he was taken prisoner, the Emperor admired his devotion but did not spare his life.—Khafi Khan.

4. The only other instances of such heroic devotion are furnished by the history of the Rajputs. A nurse saved Rana Oodey Singh's life by making over her own son to the assassins and the Sardar of Jhalawar saved the life of Pratap by personating the prince in the battle of Haldighat. See Todd's *Annals of Rajasthan.*

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

ment and indignation which led to the disgrace of the aged minister.[1]

Banda had made his escape to Nahan and all attempts to capture him proved fruitless. After this victory the Emperor passed some time at Sadhowra hunting in the lower hills. He was still there when Banda appeared again at Pathankot. Bayazid Khan, Governor of Jammoo, with his nephew Shams Khan, advanced to meet him, but they were defeated and both killed in the action.[2] The Emperor now hastened towards Lahore and sent Muhammad Amin Khan and Rustam Dil Khan against the Sikh leader. The diplomatic Banda, however, again fled into the hills and was soon beyond the reach of the Imperial Generals. The Emperor passed six or seven months peacefully in Lahore but he developed signs of insanity and died in February 1712.[3]

The death of the Emperor was the signal for the usual struggles for the throne amongst

---

1. Although soon restored to favour, his grief had shattered his health and he died in the spring of 1711 A. D. *Tarikh-i-Mohamad Shahi.*

2. This battle was fought near Bahrampur (Gurdaspur District) in the spring of 1711, three or four months after the siege of Lohgarh. According to *Sair-ul-Mutakhireen* Bayazid was Governor of Sarhind and was killed by a Sikh while praying in his own tent. (page 402).

3. He ordered all the dogs and donkeys of Lahore to be killed, and all Sadhoos and Faqirs to be expelled.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the various claimants. These commotions favoured the cause of the Sikhs Jahandar Shah, who succeeded, reigned for a few months and appointed Zabardast Khan, Governor of Lahore. Both were, however, incompetent to rule. Farrukhsiyar removed Jahandar from the throne and appointed Abdul Samad Diler Jang, Governor of Lahore.[1] The years 1712 and 1713 were most unfavourable to the Sikhs. Thousands had been captured and put to death and the year 1714 was visited by a deadly famine. In 1714 Banda again descended from the hills and fell upon the country round Batala and Kalanour.[2]

The new Governor of Lahore and Muhammad Amin Khan were immediately sent after him, but he again retreated into the hills and eluded the Imperial troops. About a year and a half passed in peace. Early in 1716, however, Banda suddenly fell upon Kalanour and Batala which had escaped his former depredations. Both the towns were now sacked and numbers of Muhammadans, including the famous family of Shaikh-ul-Ahmad, were put to death.

---

1. According to the *Sair*, Abdul Samad was Governor of Kashmir when he received orders to undertake the expedition. The order was accompanied by a *Sanad* appointing his son, Zakariya, Governor of Lahore. (p. 402).

2. In the Gurdaspore district. Akbar was crowned Emperor in this town.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Farrukhsiyar was exasperated to hear the news of these fresh disasters. He sent strict orders to the Nazim of Lahore to destroy the power of Banda. Abdul Samad accordingly set out in pursuit of Banda with a large army of chosen warriors and a powerful artillery.[1]

Banda was defeated at Kot Mirza Jan near Kalanour and was forced to retreat from post to post, fighting valiantly and inflicting heavy losses on his victors. He was at length compelled to shelter himself in the fort of Gurdaspore.[2] He was closely besieged; nothing could be conveyed to him from without; and after consuming all his provisions, and eating horses, asses and even the forbidden ox he

---

1. He was assisted by the Hakims of Eminabad, Pasrur, Patti, Kalanaur, and Raja Bheem Singh Katoch and Dhruva Deva of Jallota. *Ibrat Nama* (*Mohamad Qasim*), f. 51,

2. Cunningham says this fort was built by the Sikhs during the civil war between Farrukhsiyar and Jahandad Shah in 1712-13. Forster and Malcolm erroneously called this fort "Lohgarh" confounding it with Mukhlispore which is called Lohgarh in Sair-ul-Mutakhireen. "Banda Bahadur," however, makes no mention of this fort unless it be identical with the "Haveli" of Bhai Duni Chand in which Banda is said to have taken shelter and from which he is said to have been captured. It is stated that Banda tried to build a fort at Kot Mirza Jan but the Moghul army came upon him before it was half completed. This seems to be the correct view as it is confirmed by Muhammad Qasim. See his *Ibrat Nama* f. 51.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

was reduced to submit.[1] Some of the Sikhs were put to death and their heads borne on pikes before Banda and others as they were marched to Delhi with all the signs of ignominy usual with bigots and current among barbarous or half-civilized conquerors.[2] The Muhammadan army dreaded Banda as a great sorcerer, and, to prevent his escape, they confined him in an iron cage chained with a Moghul officer who was to plunge his dagger into him if he attempted to fly.[3] He was brought to Delhi with 740 followers all in chains preceded by 2,000 Sikh heads on pikes.[4]

---

1. Budh Singh's *Risala-i-Nanak Shah* states that, when pressed hard, Banda with his followers sallied forth from the fort, sword in hand, and was taken prisoner fighting. Banda's army, according to Qasim, was 10,000 out of which, according to Khafi Khan, 8,000 had died of hunger. The ox-eating theory must be ascribed to the bigotry of Khafi Khan. On the other hand, if it be based on facts it does not mean that Banda himself or any of his Hindu followers used the forbidden flesh. There must have been hundreds of scavengers and other low class camp followers in the fortress and Banda might have connived at their slaughter of some oxen to stave off the death by starvation.

2. Cunningham based on the *Sair*, p. 403.

3. The point is mentioned by McGregor. The Russian rebel Pugat Cheff was also put in an iron cage when arrested in 1774.

4. Wheeler's *Early Records of British India*, 180 gives 780 as the number of captives.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

"In order to give them a contemptible and ludicrous appearance they were forced to dress themselves in sheep skins and were then mounted on asses and camels and exhibited in all the thoroughfares and places of public resort of the city. Banda was placed on an elephant with his face smeared with black and a woollen cap placed over his head, and an executioner standing over him, sword in hand. He was made to take the lead, as their mock chief."[1] One hundred of them were publicly beheaded every day until all but Banda were removed. "They met their doom with the utmost indifference; nay, they even clamoured for priority of martyrdom."[2] On the eighth day Banda himself was arraigned before his judges. "He was dragged from his cage like a wild beast and then dressed in a princely robe embroidered with gold and a scarlet turban. The heads of his followers, who had been previously executed were paraded on pikes all round him. The executioner with a drawn sabre stood behind him in readiness to carry out the sentence of his judges. All the *Omerahs* of the court tauntingly asked him why he, a man of such unquestionable knowledge and ability had committed such outrageous offences. He retorted that he was a

---

1. Latif.

2. Latif, Malcolm, Cunningham, Khafi Khan, Sair, etc. Some of the East India Company's agents were at that time in Delhi and witnessed the whole thing with their own eyes. See Wheeler's *Early Records of British India*, page 180.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

scourage in the hands of the Almighty for the chastisement of evil-doers and that power was now given to others to chastise him for his transgressions. His son was now placed in his lap, and he was ordered to cut his throat, a knife being handed to him for that purpose."[1] He did so, silent and unmoved; his own flesh was then torn with red hot pincers, and amid these torments he expired."[2]

---

1. Latif. According to some his son was murdered and his flesh thrown into Banda's face.

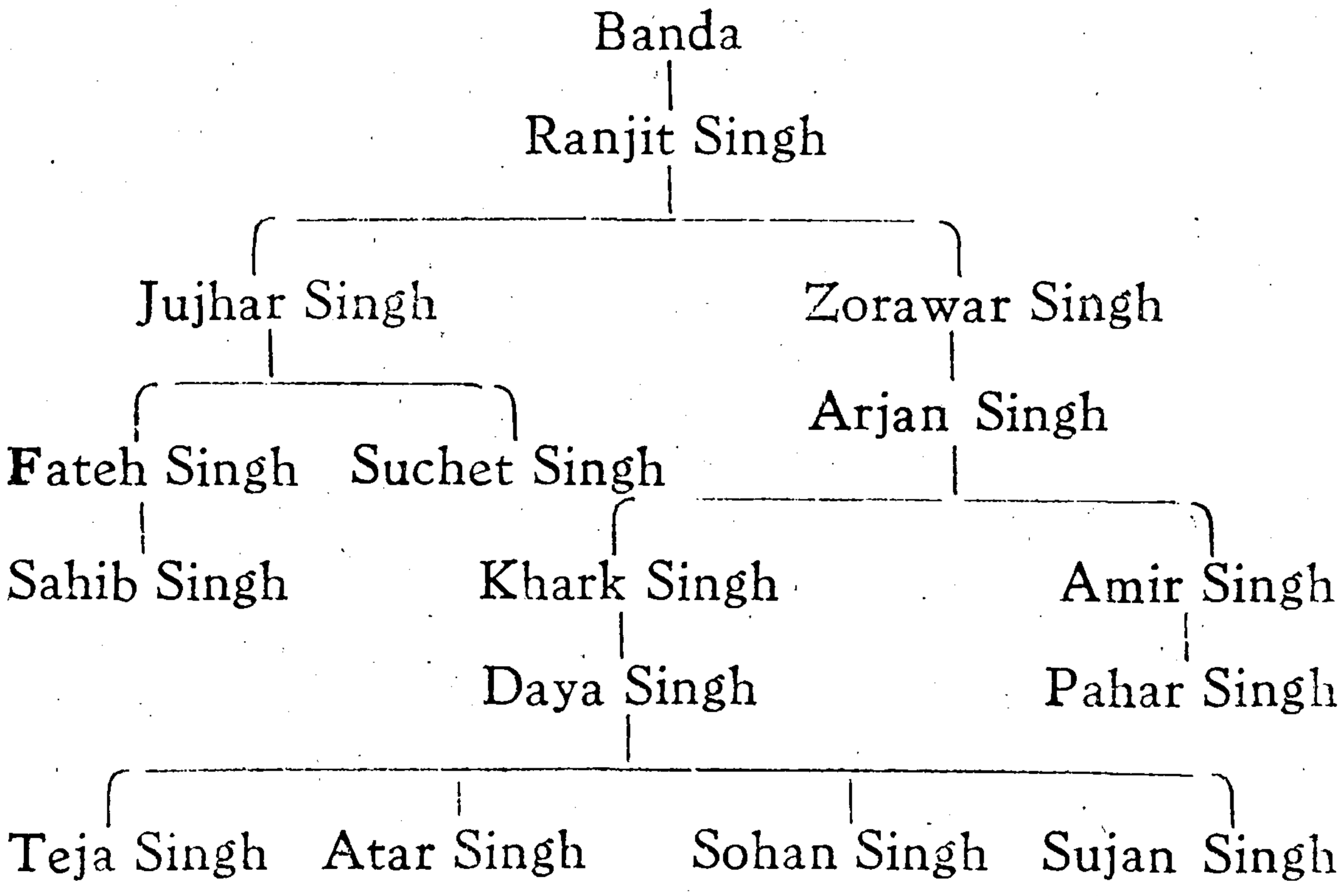
2. Cunningham, Banda Bahadur, however, holds that Banda was dragged behined an elephant after these tortures and was thrown on the banks of the Jamna as dead to be devoured by wolves and jackals. A faqir, however, finding some traces of life in him picked him up and nursed him till all his wounds were healed. Banda then fled to the Punjab in disguise. Conditions had, however, entirely changed in the meantime. The Sikhs were divided into two parties hostile to each other, one professing allegiance to Banda himself and the other, as *Tatwa Khalsa*, adhering to the original creed. An active persecution by Abdul Samad had struck terror into the hearts of the Sikhs and had driven them to the hills and forests and wastes of Bhatinda and Bikanir. Any organisation now seemed to be impossible. Banda took up his abode as a Sadhoo at Bhabbhar in the Jammoo hills. His first wife was with him when he was tortured and their son hacked to pieces before their eyes. She is said to have been coerced into Islam and sent on a forced pilgrimage to Mecca. He married again and had a son Ranjit Singh in 1728. Banda died on the 14th of Jeth, 1798 Samvat, *i.e.*, in May 1741 A. D. His tomb is situated two or three miles from Bhabbhar.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

ADVANCE MADE UNDER BANDA

It is of course undeniable that the man who brought about a revolution in the character of the Sikhs and breathed a new life into them was Govind Singh. But is may be

A fair is held there every year when thousands, who still follow Banda's descendants as their spiritual guides, assemble from all parts of the Punjab. The incumbent of the Gaddi in 1907 was Teja Singh. The genealogical tree of Banda's dynasty is as follows :—



The incumbent in 1907 and all his brothers were childless. Malcolm writing more than a century ago refers to the view stated above and even mentions Bhabbhar where Banda took his abode after escaping from Delhi. The story is also given in *Panth Prakash*. Nevertheless I am constrained to say that the story is not beyond all doubt, unless it be supposed that Banda escaped again from Gurdaspur and was never taken to Delhi at all.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

said without any fear of contradiction that it was Banda who taught them first how to fight and conquer. Without the least disparagement to the extraordinary genius and military ability of the Tenth Guru it may be pointed out that his activities were mainly confined to desultory warfare with the petty chiefs of the hill States and the first time he came into serious collision with the imperial troops, he found the shock too great for him. His warfare may without any irreverence be called the rehersal of the great drama which the Sikhs were to enact under the guidance of Banda. The plot was of the Guru's conception, some actors were prepared and trained by him, but it was Banda who brought them out and made them play as it were before the full House. Whereas the Guru's possessions had not even temporarily extended much beyond the confines of the hills, the whole country from Lahore to Panipat lay for once, practically at Banda's feet.[1] His great successes gave Sikhism a prestige and a power which had never yet been associated with it. Those who had never heard the names of the Gurus were impressed with its grandeur by the victories of Banda and joined his ranks in thousands. His personal magnetism too was great, and his undaunted courage and extraordinary valour

---

1. Batches of Sikhs despatched by Banda had ransacked the whole country up to the Garden of Shalamar at Lahore. Khafi Khan.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

knit his followers closely to him.[1] The fact that not a single Sikh out of the thousands captured and executed by the Moghul Government renounced his faith to save his life was no less due to the exemplary piety and lofty character of Banda than to the inspiration of his predecessor. Guru Govind Singh had diverted the attention of his followers from the plough to the sword and had set the seal of his sanction on war and bloodshed if the cause of justice and righteousness could not be otherwise vindicated. He had sown the seed, Banda reaped the harvest. The Guru had enunciated principles, Banda carried them into practice. Govind had destroyed the awe inspired by the Moghul despotism. Banda completely broke the charm of its invincibility. The Hindus, after centuries of subjection, realised under Banda that they could still fight and conquer, and when he fell, the dreams of Khalsa supremacy inspired by Govind were considerably nearer the point of realisation.

Still however Banda failed. The causes of his failure may be enumerated as follows:—

1. The vigorous rule of Farrukhsiyar. Revolutions cannot raise their heads under strong ruler. Napoleon used to say that if Louis XVI had mowed down a few hundreds,

---

1. Gulaboo the man who saved Banda's life by allowing himself to be captured in his place was at first a tobacconist in the Moghul army that invaded Lohgarh in 1710.—Khafi Khan.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the very first day of the mob demonstration, there would have been no such thing as the French Revolution.

Farrukhsiyar seems to have been a believer in the maxim "slay, slay and again slay". The settlement with the Rajputs had left him free to strengthen the central government and the strength of the central government spread to the provinces. The lazy, luxurious and demoralised Nazims became alert and energetic to keep pace with the Emperor's activity. Such was at least Abdul Samad Khan who ruled in Lahore from 1714 to 1726 A.D. His precautionary measures and vigorous rule checked the power of Banda and put a permanent stop to his ambitions.

2. The second cause of Banda's failure, of course, lay in his own conduct. He was after all not a regular convert to Sikhism and had enjoyed spiritual leadership in his own limited sphere. He did not enter into the spirit of Sikhism as it had been modified by Guru Govind Singh. Its theocratic character he had grasped but he does not seem to have fully realised that Govind had given it a distinct *panthic* individuality, and any efforts, howsoever laudable, to treat it otherwise would fail. He tried to tamper with it and modify it in such a way as to make it appear less sectarian and more nationalist in its character. The general tone of its tenets and the protection of the cow which formed an

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

outstanding feature of Banda's mission had rallied the Hindus to his banner. Still there seemed to be something exotic in Sikhism which in Banda's opinion detracted from its value as a lever for the uplifting of the Hindus. Accordingly he tried to give it a more decidedly Hinduistic tone by altering some of its distinctive institutions. (a) The long hair, the most prominent badge of Sikhism and most important under Govind ceased to remain an essential feature of Sikhism under Banda. The eating of animal diet had been encouraged by Govind, but Banda, being a *vaishnava*, discountenanced it and exhorted the Sikhs to refrain from it. He substituted "Fateh Dharma, Fateh Darshan" instead of "Wah Guruji ka Khalsa, Wah Guruji ki Fateh" which was certainly a very serious innovation. (b) Nor did Banda fully understand the democratical character of Sikhism. One of the injunctions given to Banda by Guru Govind Singh was never to do anything without consulting the sense of the Khalsa. Banda acted upon this advice in the beginning but his successes made him indifferent to the opinion of the Khalsa. *Panth Prakash* states that Guru Govind's widow being won over by the Government was made to write a letter to Banda urging him to make his submission and give up fighting. He refused to comply with the letter. The lady then addressed a circular letter to all the true Sikhs to cease to have anything to do with the insolent innovator. This is said to have precipitated the breach

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

between 'Banda's followers and the *Tatwa Khalsa*.[1]

Panth Prakash also says that the Sikhs were further weakened by certain conciliatory measures taken by Farrukhsiyar or his deputy in Lahore. Five hundred Sikhs who were disaffected towards Banda were taken into service on a rupee a day and the rest were pacified by the grant of Jhabbal near Amritsar, with a revenue of Rs. 5,000 to the Durbar Sahib at Amritsar. The conditions of this "treaty" were as follows :—

1. The Khalsa shall refrain from committing depredations in the country.

2. The Khalsa shall not help Banda.

3. In case of a foreign invasion the Khalsa shall fight for the Emperor.

4. There shall be no reduction in the pay or the jagir of the Khalsa.

5. No Hindu shall be compelled to embrace Islam and no sacred place of the Hindus shall be destroyed or desecrated.

6. The Hindus shall not be treated harshly and their religious susceptibities shall be respected.

---

5. The Chief Khalsa Diwan's *Banda Bahadur* rejects the view as spurious.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

All these circumstances combined to alienate the *Tatwa Khalsa* from Banda, and the relations between Banda and the "Tatwa Khalsa," once strained, never became cordial again. Many faithful Sikhs left Banda's army, and one of their great leaders, Bhai Binod Singh Tehun, deserted Banda when he was reduced to straits in the fort of Gurdaspore. In fact Banda had never had the same whole-hearted support of the Sikhs after the conquest of Sarhind. The career of Banda which promised to be crowned with glorious success was thus cut short by his sacerdotal ambition, incomprehension of the true nature of Sikhism, the machinations of the Moghul Government and the demoralisation which for a time Farrukhsiyar's persecuting hand spread into the ranks of the Khalsa.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER XIII

Temporary Suppression of the Sikhs

(1716-1738)

The history of Sikhism from the fall of Banda to the permanent occupation of Lahore by the Sikhs in 1768 A. D. is a most chequered one. It is a record of the life-and-death struggle between the declining power of the Moghul and the rising state of the Khalsa, and the ups and downs of this part of Sikh history surpass in interest the record of the struggles of any other people striving after superiority.

This period of nearly fifty years can be divided into five epochs of nearly ten years, each of them being marked by some important advance made by the Khalsa. The epochs extend from :—

1. 1716-1724 A. D.
2. 1725-1738 A. D.
3. 1738-1748 A. D.
4. 1748-1758 A. D.
5. 1758-1768 A. D.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

The defeat of Banda and the destruction of his army were followed by a period of reaction and persecution which for the time being proved most disastrous to the Sikhs. Divided at home[1] they were pressed from without so mercilessly that for a time it seemed that the boast of Farrukhsiyar to destroy all trace of these infidels would be carried out to the letter Hundreds fell victims every day to the bigotry and fanaticism of the Moghul rulers, and thousands, who had joined merely for the sake of booty, cut their hair, shaved their beards and joined the Hindu flock again The true Sikhs fled to the jungles, hills and deserts of Rajputana and Bikanir. Prices were laid on their heads, and whenever one was caught or betrayed, no mercy was shown to him. When a mother was asked how many children she had, she would very often say

---

1. Banda's followers had, during his ascendancy, taken possession of the Temple at Amritsar and of course appropriated all the income. This added to other causes of animosity detailed above, led to bitter hostilities. In 1725 the relations between the Khalsa and the Bandais had grown so strained that recourse was had to violence. It was only through the good offices of Bhai Mani Singh that civil war and blood-shed were prevented. Lottery was cast and the result was favourable to the Khalsa. The temple was restored to the Khalsa and Bandais were expelled. This occurred during the period of depression and is another proof of the weakened state of Govind's followers, for otherwise they would not have left what was theirs by right to the uncertain chances of a lottery.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

that she had four but one had become a Sikh. To be a Sikh was to be already among the dead. Those who had fled from the persecuting hand of the authorities dared not show their faces and passed their days in the greatest hardship. They lived on roots, fruits and green vegetables and even these were looked upon as great luxuries. Their wives and children were left to the tender mercies of the Moghuls and it was not a rare thing for the women to be taken prisoners, tortured and even put to death.[1]

It is usual with English historians to say that nothing was heard of the Sikhs for a generation, *i. e.*, from 1716 to 1738. It is true about the first eight years of this period but certainly the Sikhs were not the people to remain quiet very long. For eight long years their internal dissensions and the powerful

---

1. The Emperor Muhammad Shah once desired his court actors to play a farce before him giving him an idea of the life of the Sikhs in exile. The farce is reproduced in the *Panth Prakash* and shows how the Sikhs consoled themselves during their homelessness and wanderings. They lived in great contentment calling the little luxuries of onions, fried grain and saltless vegetables by the most flattering names. They drank *bhang* and when they threw away the ball of the crushed leaves they likened it to a cannon ball hitting the Moghul in the heart. They beguiled their time by such songs as "Listen, O mother of the Moghuls, the Singhs, thy sons-in-law are coming." Listen, O sister of the Moghuls, thy jewels would be taken by the Singhs," etc.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

hand of Abdulsamad had been too strong to allow them to take any effective steps. They had been silent sufferers all this time and regarded it a great victory to escape with their lives. The year 1724, however, was hardly over when they began to make their appearance again in the plains of the Punjab. They formed themselves into small bands and began their old tactics of harassing the Government by their plundering expeditions and guerilla warfare. All English historians, as said above, are silent as to the doings of the Sikhs between 1716 and 1738. Ali-ud-Din's *Ibratnama* and Gyan Singh's *Panth Prakash*, however, give some details of their exploits between 1724 and 1738.[1]

The first thing done by the reawakened Khalsa was to punish the traitors who had betrayed their brethren to the government and the petty tyrants who had like mean cowards vented their wrath upon their unprotected wives and children.

The fresh depredations of the Sikhs aroused the anger of the emperor against Abdulsamad. He was consequently transferred to Multan in 1728 and his son Zakriya Khan, known as "Khan Bahadur" was appointed Governor of Lahore. A moving column was

---

1. The Persian Ms. "*Risala-i-Nanak Shah*" (No. 281 Ethe's Bodleian) also throws some light on the subject.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

at the same time established to look after the Sikhs and prevent them from assembling anywhere in large numbers. This flying column acted energetically, chasing the Sikhs whenever they appeared, but the Sikhs were fast becoming strong and getting out of control. Collisions between the Moghul *Hakims* and the Khalsa were becoming more frequent every day. Tara Singh of Dalawant (District Amrisar) defeated Jafar Beg Patti. The Sikhs looted the the treasure near Kanha Kachha (Lahore District) when it was being carried from Kasur to Lahore. The Royal merchant Murtaza Khan who supplied the Emperor's horses was robbed the same year (1726) near Jandiala (Amritsar District).

In 1730 the Sikhs fell upon the guards carrying treasure from Lahore to Delhi and carried away every pie of it. An army was sent from Delhi to chastise the robbers but the Sikhs at once fled to the hills. In 1731 they came down again and began to commit highway robberies practically at the very gates of Lahore. The Muhammadans of Lahore collected in large numbers and joined the Governor in a religious war upon the Sikhs and gained two victories over the Sikhs but were ultimately defeated near the city gates with great loss.[1] In 1733 an effort was again

1. *Panth Prakash* of Gyan Singh and *Panth Prakash* of Ratan Singh place this crusade in 1731. Muhammad Kasim in his *Ibratnamah* places it in 1710.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

made to crush the Sikhs by concessions and bribes. Khan Bahadur recommended to the Government of Delhi the grant of a Jagir and title to the Sikhs. His suggestion was accepted and the offer of a Jagir of Rs. 100,000 and title of Nawab for their leader was sent to their representative[1] at Amritsar. The offer was at first rejected with scorn but better counsels prevailed and the jagir was accepted. No one, however, would come forward to accept the title and robes of honour. They were tossed from one man to the other until Kapur Singh, a Jat of Faizullahpur who was moving the *parkha* in the assembly gave his consent to be decorated with the title and robes of a Nawab.[2]

---

so also Mufti Ali-ud-Din in his book of the same name. Khafi Khan and Latif, who follow him, agree with the authors of *Ibratnamahs*.

1. The most important of these at this time were the following : Darbara Singh, Kapur Singh, Hari Singh Hazuri, Deep Singh Shahid, Jassa Singh, Ramgarhia, Karm Singh, Budha Singh Suker Chakia and Girja Singh, etc.—*Panth Prakash.*

2. This Kapur Singh became one of the most powerful of the Sikh leaders and founded one of the twelve Misals, called Fyzulpuria after his native place. Syed Muhammad Latif gives a different origin of his title. "His followers" he says "who numbered thousands gave him the title of Nawab, as a compliment to his genius, this being almost the only instance of a Sikh assuming a Muhammadan title." Needless to say that Latif's theory is far less probable than the account given above which is according to the *Panth Prakash.*

(Continued on Page 206)

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

The Sikhs now continued peacefully for sometime living upon the revenues of the new jagir.

In 1734, the Sikhs were divided for the sake of convenience into two groups according to the age of the members, one including the older and called *Budha-Dal*, and the other consisting of younger Sikhs called *Taruna-Dal*. The young Khalsa was further divided into five groups :—

(1) Commanded by Deep Singh Shahid.

(2) Under Prem Singh and Dharm Singh Khatris.

(3) Commanded by Daswandha Singh.

(4) Commanded by Baba Kahan Singh and Baba Binod Singh.

(5) Consisting of Mazhabi Sikhs nnder the command of their leaders Bir Singh and Amar Singh.

Kapur Singh " converted a large number of people, jats, carpenters, weavers, Jhiwars, Khatris and others to the persuasion of Govind and the religious respect in which he was held was so great that initiation into the *pahul* of the Guru from his hands was considered a great distinction. He prided himself upon having killed 500 Muhammadans with his own hand.....He was certainly the most illustrious and most dreaded of Sikh Sardars before the days of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and Ala Singh of Patiala. He died in 1753 at Amritsar." —Syed Muhammad Latif.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

All of these various groups settled in the countryside round Amritsar. In 1735 the jagir being thought no longer necessary was confiscated.[1] The campaign of plunder and rapine was again opened by the Khalsa.

Lakhpat Rai, the Diwan of Lahore, was however soon upon them and the young Khalsa were driven beyond the Sutlej. In 1736, the old Khalsa and Nawab Kapur Singh who had not been behind their younger co-religionists in their depredations came in collision with Haibat Khan, one of the Lahore Generals, and were defeated in an action fought at Vasarki, near Amritsar.

Both the armies now combined and defeated the Moghul army near *Hujra Shah Mugim.*

About two years more were passed in this desultory warfare which gradually strengthened the hands of the Khalsa and weakened the power of the Moghul Government. In the meantime circumstances had arisen which foreboded the ruin of the Moghul and paved the way for the ascendancy of the Khalsa.

---

1. Panth Prakash lays the blame on the Government for breach of contract, but it seems more probable that the Government was driven to take this step by the renewed energy of the *Taruña Dal* or the Young Army.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER XIV

Sikhs Reappear and become a power

(1738-1748)

The circumstances alluded to in the last chapter, which inspired new life into the Khalsa and encouraged them to make greater and more determined efforts, may be enumerated as follows :—

(*a*) The weakening of the Central Government at Delhi which was brought about by the following circumstances :—

(1) Luxuriousness and imbecility of Muhammad Shah[1] and his successors.

---

1. Poets, musicians, actors, buffoons and nautch girls took up more time of the Emperor than State affairs. One instance would suffice to show the depth of degradation reached by the Emperor and his courtiers. Nadir's letter was not answered for two years ; he sent another while on his way to India. It was received by the Emperor when he was drinking with his courtiers. The Emperor took it and threw it into the wine quoting a line from Hafiz. "Let this meaningless document be drowned in the sparkling wine."

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

(2) The dissensions raging between the leading courtiers, who would rather see the Empire going to the dogs than see a rival taking credit by saving it from ruin. The only sensible man at the court, *viz.*, Asaf Jah was ridiculed as dancing before the King like a monkey. "All right," said Asaf Jah, "I shall not be satisfied unless I see a monkey dancing at every turret and minaret of Delhi." True to his word, it was he who invited Nadir Shah to Delhi and for the first time exposed the hollowness of the Empire.

(3) The rising power of the Mahrattas and other States. "Within a

---

The favourite Queen of Muhammad Shah was a Hindu dancing girl who afterwards became the mother of the heir apparent and held the chief power when her son, Ahmad Shah, succeeded to the throne. The new Emperor himself was a true son of his parents. Having been brought up in the seraglio he had no experience of public business. He became absorbed in youthful pleasures, and gave up the whole of his time to pastimes, sport and debauchery, frivolities inherited by him on both sides. He extended his zenana (seraglio) so that it occupied a space of a mile. He lived in gardens for one or two months at a time, and would remain without seeing the face of any male being for a week together.—Syed Muhammad Latif.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

generation, Muhammadan adventurers had established separate dominions in Bengal, Lucknow and Hyderabad; the Mahratta Peshwa had startled the Moslems of India by suddenly appearing in arms before the Imperial city," in 1737, when Baji Rao made an incursion from Agra towards Delhi. The Rohillas in Rohelkhand and the Hindu Jats in Bhartpore had established independent kingdoms, while the Rajputs had already practically thrown off the Moghul yoke.

(4) Invasion of Nadir Shah.

(5) The two invasions, 4th and 5th, of Ahmad Shah Durrani.

(*b*) The second circumstance which encouraged the Sikhs to rise, and contributed greatly to their strength was the weakness of the Lahore government. The weakness of the Delhi government might at first sight seem to have rather tended to the strength and independence of the Punjab government like that of Oudh, Bengal, Rohelkhand, etc., etc. But the Punjab being the favourite resort of the Moghul Emperors was under stronger control than any other province, and it so happened

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

that all the governors except one were weak. Mir Mannu, who formed the exception, and was conscious of his strength and ability as having been the victor of Ahmad Shah Durrani, was the man to assert his independence of Delhi, and he did it, but his ambition was frustrated by the invasion of the Durrani and his own premature death.

The following circumstances contributed to the further weakness of the Lahore government :—

(1) FREQUENT CHANGE OF GOVERNORS AND GOVERNMENTS. From 1712 to 1768, when the Punjab passed permanently into the hands of the Sikhs, Lahore passed through the administration of twenty different Governors. In ten years, from 1756 to 1767, seven revolutions took place in Lahore and twelve Viceroys held the reins of government one after another.[1] The

1. The name of the Governors from 1712 to 1767 are stated below :—

Aslam Khan (Islam K.) 2. Zabardast Khan 1712. 3. Abdul Samad Khan 1714. 4. Zakriya Khan, K. B. 1726. 5. Yahya Khan 1743. 6. Shahniwaz Khan 1746. 7. Lakhpat Rai and Jumla Khan 1747. 8. Mir Mannu 1748. 9. Mir Mannu's widow

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Moghul authority came to an end in 1756 with the third invasion of the Durrani. The Durrani's son ruled for a year and was turned out by Jassa Singh Kalal who was turned out within a year by the Mahrattas who were soon ejected by the Abdali whose deputies held Lahore for about three years when they were expelled by the Sikhs under Sobha Singh, Lahna Singh and Gujar Singh. They ruled Lahore for a year and were turned out again by the Abdali, but the Abdali's governor was deposed by the Sikhs again within a year.

(2) JEALOUSY AND TREACHERY OF OFFICIALS :—Jaspat Rai was the Governor of Jullundur Doab when Zakriya Khan became Governor of Lahore. He transferred Jaspat Rai to the minor Parganah of Eminabad and appointed Adeena Beg in his place. Adeena

---

and son 1752. 10. Prince Tymoor and Jehan Khan 1756. 11. Jassa Singh Kalal 1758. 12. Mirza Khan (under the Mahrattas) 1758. 13. Bapoo Rao Mahratta 1758. 14. Haji Karam Dad Khan 1759. 15. Sarbuland Khan 1761. 16. Obed Khan 1761. 17. Kabuli Mal 1762. 18. Gujar Singh, Lahna Singh, Sobha Singh 1765. 19. Dadan Khan 1766. 20. Gujar Singh, Lahna Singh, Sobha Singh 1767.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

was a strong ruler and soon restored peace in his territory. He was frequently praised at the court of Lahore to the great disappointment and chagrin of Jaspat Rai and his brother Lakhpat Rai, the Diwan of Lahore. The Khatri brothers stung by jealousy were always anxious to degrade their successful rival in the eyes of the Governor. Jaspat Rai, therefore, instigated the Sikhs to create troubles in the Jullundur Doab in order to harass and exasperate Adeena Beg. Adeena, on the other hand, incited the peasantry of the Punjab, mostly Sikhs, to riot and rebellion."[1] Thus while the officials indulged in personal jealousies and tried to satisfy their private grudges, the Sikhs encouraged by all and fearing none went on progressing unchecked.

---

1. *Ibratnamah* by Mufti Ali-ud-Din. Cunningham refers to the suspicion under which Adeena was held for alleged temporising with the peasantry for his own purposes which were supposed to be furthered by the continuance of Sikh disturbances. Budh Singh definitely attributed the prolonged disturbances caused by Sikhs to the connivance and even collusion of Adeena who wanted to keep them up to deter his rivals from attempting to oust him from the governorship of Jullundur Doab. *Risala-i-Nanak Shah.*

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

(3) Next came the invasion of Nadir and the inroads of the Durrani King. The Punjab was occupied by foreigners so many times, and every time they found it weaker and left it still more distracted and disorganised. Of the nine[1] invasions of Ahmad Shah, seven were directed against the Punjab and created a confusion from which it never recovered until it passed into the hands of Ranjit Singh.

(*c*) The third cause of the uprising of the Khalsa was the execution of some of their noblest and holiest leaders, Mani Singh and Taru Singh commanded the highest respect-of the Khalsa, and the former[2] as a companion of the last Guru was regarded with the greatest reverence throughout the Punjab. They were both arrested and put to death on flimsy charges of treason.

The history of the Sikhs from 1738 A.D., where we left it in the last chapter, up to the

---

1. All historions mention only eight invasions of Ahmad Shah. Mufti-Ali-ud-Din mentions the ninth during which the invader came up to Jukalian on the Chenab and went away suffering from cancer.

2. Cunningham makes Taru Singh also an old companion of the Guru, (*History of the Sikhs*, p. 91) but it seems very improbable.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Sikh supremacy at Lahore falls into three equal periods of ten years, each marking an advanced stage in the political organisation of the Sikhs.

The misery and hardship suffered by the Sikhs from 1716 to 1738 under the persecuting hand of the Moghul government had already embittered their hearts against the Government. They had lost no opportunity of taking their revenge and had already, as shown above, begun to harass the Government in all directions. But the executions of their great and universally revered leaders had set the fire of vengeance ablaze in their hearts and they longed for an opportunity to avenge the blood of the martyrs upon their merciless persecutors and extirpate the oppressors of their race.

The opportunity was afforded by the invasion of Nadir Shah who descended upon the plains of the Punjab in the early part of 1738. The confusion that ensued proved most favourable to the enterprise of the Sikhs. The Lahore government, faced by a more formidable foe, left the Sikhs to pursue their plans undisturbed. They had already formed themselves into bands of robbers and were scouring the country up and down. Now they threw up a fortress at Dullewal near Derah Baba Nanak, on the Ravi, east of Lahore. From this base of operations they issued in large numbers, plundering the Muhammadan villages, government officials and even Hindus taking

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the side of the Muhammadan government. They did not spare the dreaded Nadir himself but fell upon the rear of his army laden with the spoils of Delhi and carried away whatever they could lay their hands upon. "Whence," demanded the imperious Nadir, "come those long-haired barbarians who dare to molest me? Destroy them and their homes." "Their homes are the saddles on their horses," was the reply."[1]

The Sikhs thus roamed unchecked for some time. The attention of the Government was, however, attracted when they assembled at Eminabad in a force of 2,000 strong and began to levy contributions in the neighbouring villages. "A villager, one day, came and complained to Jaspat Rai, Foujdar of Eminabad, encamped at Khukhran, three miles from his headquarters, that a band of two thousand Sikhs had fallen upon the village and had driven away the whole of his flock of sheep and goats which the Sikhs were now killing and eating at Rori Sahib[2] near Eminabad. The Diwan sent them word to go away but the Sikhs refused to disperse so quickly. The Diwan attacked them with his men, and a sharp battle took place. During the battle a

---

1. General Gordon. *The Sikhs*, p. 58.

2. One of the sacred places of Sikhs, one mile from Eminabad (Gujranwala District), where Nanak halted for a time during his travels.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Rngretta Sikh caught hold of the tail of the Diwan's elephant, and mounting up to the howdah cut off the head of the Diwan and ran away with it. The death of the Diwan was the signal for a general stampede of the Moghul troops. The Sikhs returned the head of the Diwan on receipt of Rs. 500 from one Bawa Kirpa Ram[1] who performed the cremation of the deceased's body.

"Lakhpat Rai, the brother of the deceased, was beside himself with rage on hearing his brother's tragic fate. The founder of Sikhism was undoubtedly a Khatri," he said, 'but I shall not call myself a Khatri if I do not blot out its name from the page of existence.' He set out accordingly with the Governor[2] himself in pursuit of the Sikhs and inflicted a severe defeat upon them in the neighbourhood of Jammu. He brought a large number of prisoners to Lahore, and after having their long hair cut had them all put to the sword in a public thoroughfare outside the Delhi Gate, the scene of their execution being now known as *Shahid Ganj* or the "place of martyrs." A proclamation was at the same time issued

---

1. This Bawa was probably a Gosain of the well-known village Badoki Gosain, the Gosains of which have been the hereditary Gurus of the Diwans of Eminabad.

2. Yahya Khan was the Governor from 1743 to 1745, during which period the events described above are recorded to have happened.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

threatening to rip open the belly of any one taking the name of Govind."[1]

These were very hard times again for the Sikhs. The *Panth Prakash* gives a vivid and very pathetic account of the hardships the fugitive Sikhs had to suffer on the barren hills of Basohli and then in the burning deserts of Malwa where they were driven by the avenging hand of the infuriated Lakhpat Rai. Their sufferings were not, however, destined to be very long. Retribution for Lakhpat Rai and an opportunity for the Khalsa were soon at hand. Yahya's younger brother Shah Nawaz Khan, who was the Governor of Multan, attacked Lahore in 1745 and expelled Yahya Khan and his Diwan, Lakhpat Rai. Fearing the wrath of the Delhi government for thus usurping the province of Lahore, Shah Nawaz turned to Ahmad Shah Durrani and invited him to invade India, promising his humble submission and hearty co-operation. The Durrani King who had always kept a greedy eye on India hailed this offer and set off to Peshawar with a force of 10,000 men. Shah Nawaz was in the meantime reproached for treason, and, was moreover, reconciled by the Prime Minister; his maternal grandfather, who promised to comfirm him as Governor of Lahore in case he opposed the progress of the invader. "On reaching the Khyber, Ahmad

---

1. *Ibrat Namah* Ali-ud-Din.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Shah sent his ambassador, Muhammad Naim Khan, to Lahore to consult Shah Nawaz about the plan of the campaign. The messenger who was a haughty and ill-mannered man displeased the young Governor by his rudeness and was sent back with an unsatisfactory answer. The Afghan King advanced to Rohtas[1] and sent another messenger, this time Sabir Shah, the son of his own spiritual guide. Shah Nawaz knew the strength of the invading army and proudly asked the messenger in a careless manner, "How is brother Ahmad Shah?" Sabir was angry at the insolent question and indignantly rebuked the youth for his vanity. Shah Nawaz was enraged and put the messenger to death by pouring molten lead into his mouth.[2] Ahmad Shah advanced upon Lahore and took it after a short resistance. Shah Nawaz fled to Delhi, and the Durrani appointed Lakhpat Rai, the Governor of Lahore with Jumla Khan[3] of Kasur as his adviser. Ahmad Shah then marched towards Delhi, but, as is well-known, was defeated at Sarhind and beat a hasty retreat towards Kabul.

These commotions proved highly favourable to the Sikh cause. They returned again to the plains and began their depredations as

---

1. A very strong fort in Jhelum District.

2. His tomb is situated behind the Royal Mosque in Lahore. The quotation is made from Ali-ud-Din's *Ibrat Namah*.

3. Moman Khan according to *Panth Prakash*.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

usual. An easy and profitable prey was found in the army of the vanquished invader which was now receding precipitately to its native country. It "gave an opportunity to the watchful Sikhs of harassing his rear and of gaining confidence in their own prowess."[1] Their resources soon increased by the rich booty their marauding excursions brought them, and they built a fort, called the Ram Rowni, near Amritsar. A most able leader had meanwhile appeared among them, "Jassa Singh Kalal, a brewer or distiller (by caste), who boldly proclaimed the birth of a new power in the State, the "Dal" of the "Khalsa" or army of the theocracy of "Singhs."[2]

The Khalsa had now become a State, a power to be reckoned with, and though often beaten, it was destined to skake the Moghul power to its foundations and built its own sovereignty on its ruins.

---

1. Cunningham, p. 93.

2. Charsa Singh, Toka Singh and Kirwur Singh were among the companions of Jassa Singh. Cunningham, p. 93.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Small ghallughara 1745 - 1747
Yahia Khan

CHAPTER XV

Sikhs take Lahore and Coin Money

(1748-1758)

The first invasion of the Durrani King had been repelled by the ability of Muin-ud-Din, the eldest son of the Wazir of Delhi. The aged minister had himself led the compaign but he was killed in the beginning of the battle while yet reading the Koran in his tent. The post of Wazir was conferred on Safdar Jang, the son-in-law of Saadat Khan, the Viceroy of Oudh. All high posts being generally hereditary, the new minister feared the claims of his rival, Muin-ud-Din, the victorious son of the late Wazir. In order to put the formidable youth out of the way, he appointed him to the Governorship of Lahore and Multan.

When Muin-ud-Din or Mir Mannu, a title which probably the Sikhs gave him and by which he is best-known, came to the Punjab in 1748, he found absolute anarchy and confusion reigning everywhere. The Sikhs had become extremely bold and troublesome. They had rallied round their new fortress and forming themselves into "fanatic confederacies were now seen roving in all

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

directions, ravaging the country and devastating the very suburbs of Lahore."[1]

As soon, therefore, as Mir Mannu was firmly established in his authority he addressed himself to the task of suppressing the Sikhs. His first act was to storm the fort of Ram Rowni which was captured and destroyed. "He then stationed detachments of troops in all parts infested by the Sikhs with stringent orders to shave their heads and beards wherever they might be found. These measures, being rigorously enforced, checked the progress of Sikh advance and compelled the votaries of the Guru to conceal themselves in the mountains and jungles. Mir Mannu issued strict orders to the hill Rajas to seize the Sikhs and send them in irons to Lahore. These orders were obeyed and hundreds of Sikhs were brought daily to Lahore and butchered at the *Nakhas* or Shahid Ganj outside the Delhi Gate, in sight of multitude of spectators. The young Mannu became an irreconcilable foe of the Sikhs and was determined to extirpate the nation."[2]

His plans were, however, thwarted for the moment by the reappearance of Ahmad Shah Durrani, a few months after Mannu had established himself in Lahore. At the close

---

1. Latif, p. 220.
2. Syed Muhammad Latif, p. 221.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

of the rainy season the Afghan King crossed the Indus at the head of a formidable army determined to retrieve the losses he had suffered during his first invasion. Mannu at once wrote to Delhi for reinforcements but the courtiers there had hardly any time to spare from their drinking bouts, concerts and dancing parties, to attend to affairs of even such importance. The Durrani meanwhile reached the banks of the Chenab, Mannu despairing of any help from Delhi gathered together his own troops and crossed the Ravi to meet the invader. Both the armies met on the banks of the Chenab, near Sodhra.[1] A little skirmishing took place, but Mannu soon realized his inability to ward off the invasion. He sued for terms, and the Afghan King being impressed by the ability of the youth who had defeated him at Sarhind and having some complicated affairs at home to look after, consented to retire on the condition that the revenue of the four districts of Pasrur, Gujrat, Sialkot and Aurangabad, the most fruitful principalities of the Punjab, should be assigned to him, as they had been to Nadir Shah from whom he pretended to have derived his title. Mannu is further said to have agreed to hold himself tributary to the Afghan King for the whole of the Punjab.[2]

---

1. An ancient town with 100 gates, near Wazirabad, founded by Ayaz, the favourite slave of Mahmud of Ghazni.

2. See Latif, Cunninghan, Elphinstone, and Murray's Ranjit Singh by Prinsep.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

The absence of the Governor and his troops from Lahore encouraged the Sikhs once more to come out from their hiding places. Their persecution and execution in hundreds simply served to increase their fanaticism and hatred against the Moslem government. They despised Mannu's cruelty and the following song seems to have been popular among them :—

"We are the crop and Mannu[1] he sickle,
The more he cuts us
The more we grow
In every house and hamlet."[1]

They took full advantage of Mannu's absence from the Capital, and suddenly fell upon Lahore in large numbers and plundered and burnt the outer city to ashes (*pak bisokhtand*). Mir Mannu was enraged to find the city in ruins on his return, and began to persecute the Sikhs more vigorously than ever. "Thousands of Sikhs were made the victims of the relentless sword, but, "The Moslem writer ruefully continues, "the arrow once shot can never come back, the city was ruined."[2]

---

1. *Mir Mannu asadi datari asi Mannu de soe Jyon jyon Mannu wadhada aharin gharin asi hoe. Ibrat Nama. Ali-ud-Din*

2. *Ibrat Nama* Ali-ud-Din. Neither Cunningham nor any other English historian makes any mention of this inroad of the Sikhs. There is, however, nothing to challenge the accuracy of Ali-ud-Din's statement.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Mir Mannu, however, soon succeeded in restoring order in his dominions by putting to death every Sikh that was captured and driving the rest to the hills and jungles. His success meanwhile in repelling the invasion by talking away the invader gained applause at Delhi. Everyone was jealous of the favour in which he was held, but the Wazir had particular apprehensions of this young man of parts. He was himself designing to set up as independent ruler of Oudh and he knew that his example would not be lost upon the son of his predecessor.[1] In order, therefore, to reduce the power of Mannu, he appointed Shahnawaz Khan to the governorship of Multan which he had held before up to 1745 when he came over to Lahore to supplant his elder brother Yahya Khan and from which he was in turn ejected by the deputy of Ahmad Shah Durrani.

This supersession greatly incensed Mannu and he at once sent his deputy, Diwan Kowra Mal, to Multan to resist the new Governor. A battle was fought in which Kowra Mal came out victorious with the help of Sikh mercenaries,[2] and Shahnawaz was slain. The victory

---

1. Cunningham.

2. *Panth Prakash* puts the number of Kowra Mal's Sikh allies at 20,000 and attributes the victory to their valour. Kowra Mal was himself a Sikh of Guru Nanak, and while his master persecuted the Sikhs he was always pleading for mercy and clemency for them. One reason for taking the Sikhs to Multan was to impress Mir Mannu favourably towards them.—*Panth Prakash.*

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

meant for Mannu a practical independence of Delhi. Mannu was greatly elated and conferring the title of Maharaja on Kowra Mal for his successful generalship made him the Governor of Multan.

Mir Mannu now saw fortune smiling upon him from all sides The Sikhs were quiet, his rivals were removed, the government of Delhi was too weak and distracted to interfere with him or question his independence. To this success was added the consciousness of having once beaten the dreaded Durrani. He felt himself, therefore, to be sufficiently strong now to declare his independence and to discontinue his allegiance to the latter if indeed he ever really looked upon him as his liege-lord. The time for the payment of the promised revenue of the four districts had passed and not a farthing had been paid. A demand for the tribute was made by the Afghan King who at the same time crossed the Indus once more in 1751-52. Having reached the right bank of the Chenab he sent his agent, Diwan Sukh Jiwan Mal, to Lahore to demand the arrears of the revenue. Mannu at first denied his liability to pay any fixed subsidy. As, however, he said, the Shah had taken the trouble of coming to the Punjab, he would be glad to pay him such arrears as might be found due, provided he forthwith retraced his steps to Kabul, as the zamindars had all fled in consternation on hearing of the approach of the Abdali King,

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

and it was impossible to levy even a pice as a tax upon the people of the country as long as the Durrani troops remained where they were."[1] This explanation was too evasive to be satisfactory and no one knew it better than Mir Mannu himself As soon as the ambassador turned his back, Mannu marched with his troops to the Chenab to meet the invader.[2] The Abdali marched upon Lahore and after six months' skirmishing and desultory fighting inflicted a severe defeat upon Mannu after a desperate battle in which the gallant Raja Kowra Mal was killed by an accident to his elephant. Mannu shut himself up in the fort, but finding further resistance fruitless, he made his submission to the invader, and the town was occupied by the Afghan troops in the spring of 1752.[3]

---

1. Latif, p. 222.

2. *Panth Prakash* holds that he simply went to give a reception to the invader, and this view seems to be more probable. Otherwise it is difficult to conceive how the Abdali could have been allowed to March to the Ravi without a battle, as Latif without perceiving his inconsistency states that Mannu had gone to meet him with all his troops reinforced by the army from Jullundur as well as Multan.

3. An interesting anecdote of Mannu's interview with the Afghan conqueror is told by Mufti Ali-ud-Din in his *Ibrat Nama*. The following conversation took place between the Durrani King and Mir Mannu.

Durrani.—" Why didn't you come to make your homage to me before " ?

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

These commotions resulting in the occuation of Lahore for the second time by the foreigners gave another crushing blow to the power of the Lahore government. While Muhammadans, invaders and defenders, were engaged in their own affairs, the Sikhs had not been idle. They had again issued from their hiding places and had spread a consternation throughout the province. They had virtually taken possession of the whole country lying between Amritsar and the hills.[1] As

---

Mir Mannu.—"Because I had, then, another lord to serve."

Durrani.—"Why didn't that lord now come to your succour"?

Mir Mannu.—"Because he thought his servant could take care of himself."

Durrani.—"What would you have done, if I had fallen in your hands"?

Mir Mannu.—"I would have cut your head and sent it to Delhi to my master."

Durrani.—"Now that you are at my mercy, what do you expect from me"?

Mir Mannu.—"If you are a merchant, sell me, if a tyrant, kill me, if a King, pardon me."

The Shah was struck with the address and frankness of his youthful adversary, and not only spared his life but conferred upon him the title of Farzand (son) Khan Bahadur Rustam-i-Hind, and confirmed him in the Governorship of Lahore.

1. Cunningham, p, 95.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

soon, therefore, as Mir Mannu was once more established on the Masnad of Lahore, he turned his attention to the Sikhs. Adeena Beg was deputed to bring them to book. Adeena welcomed this commission as an opportunity to undo the suspicions which attached to his inaction and treachery at the recent battle of Lahore, and to his alleged temporising with the insurgent peasantry of the Punjab. He fell upon the Sikhs during a festival at Makhowal where they had assembled from all quarters, and inflicted a total defeat upon them. But his object was still to be thought their friend and to desist from crushing them in order to maintain his importance as the manager of a turbulent province. Therefore "he came to an understanding with them that the payment of their own rents should be nominal or limited and their exactions from others moderate and systematic.[1] He also took many of them into his pay, one of the number being Jussa Singh, a carpenter by caste, who afterwards became the founder and head of a powerful confederacy.[2]

---

1. Cunningham p. 95.

2. Jassa Singh, according to *Panth Prakash* had taken service with Adeena Beg long before this, in fact before the battle of Ram Rawni (1748). He had been excommunicated by his co-religionists for infanticide and had consequently joined the Muhammadans. He was afterwards pardoned and taken back because he had never betrayed the Sikhs, nor fought against them with a will.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

This was the first acknowledgment of the independence or semi-independence of the Sikhs. Greater opportunities were, however, still waiting for them. Mannu died in 1752[1] a few months after his submission to the Durrani King and the reins of Government fell into the hands of his widow, Murad Begam, who began to rule in the name of her infant son, Muhammad Amin Khan, as the vassal of the King of Kabul. Ambitious and clever as she was, the times were too turbulent for petticoat government. The Sikhs had now a golden opportunity, and extended their ravages in all directions.[2] The infant Amin Khan died, soon after, of small-pox. His mother took the government in her own hands and proclaimed herself the Governor of the Punjab. The nobles at Lahore who had a deep regard for the memory of her deceased husband and whom she managed to cajole by promises of rewards and honours gave her their full support, and she also managed to obtain Royal *firmans* of confirmation from the courts of Delhi as well as Kabul.

Finding herself firmly established in her authority, she began to betray the frailty of

---

1. Elphinstone places his death in 1756, so does Latif, but he contradicts himself in the next page. In his *Ibrat Nama* Ali-ud-Din puts it in 1167 H, which would agree with the above date given by Cunningham.

2. See Malcolm.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

her sex. Mir Bhikhari Khan was her favourite at the time, but failing to requite her clandestine love for him he was put to death by the chamber maids of the infatuated Begum.[1] Her attitude towards her other courtiers too became different. "Almost all gave up attending the darbar, where not only honour but life was at stake, and petitions were sent to the Court of Delhi complaining of the conduct of the Begam. Ghazi-ud-Din who had risen to the position of Prime Minister by ousting Safdar Jang was betrothed to the daughter of Mir Mannu, and having great regard for his would-be mother-in-law he sent Syed Jamil, one of his confidential servants, to help the Begum with his advice. The situation thus improved to some extent. but the masterful Begum was soon tired of her new councillor and asked the Wazir to remove him. This request was rejected in spite of her repeated entreaties. The exasperated Begum now wrote to the King of Kabul complaining of the interference of the Delhi Government. Her duplicity being soon discovered, Ghazi-ud-Din marched with a large force to punish her. She was taken captive and brought to Delhi where the young Wazir took her daughter into marriage and put the mother in confinement. The Governorship of Lahore was given to

---

1. Ali-ud-Din ascribes his death to his insubordination and insolence. Murray and Browne refer to the supposed relations of Bhikhari Khan and Murad Begam.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Adeena Beg Khan who had been instrumenta in the ruin of the self-willed Begum.

These internecine quarrels and civil wars had again given an opportunity to the Sikhs to raise their heads and renew their depredations. "These bearded freebooters," says Syed Muhammad Latif, "traversed various parts of the province, laying waste the country, depopulating villages and towns and carrying out flocks and herds. All order, both civil and military was at an end. Not a pice could be levied from the zamindars. Disorder, anarchy andc onfusion prevailed throughout the country.

To complete, as it were, the work of ruin and prepare the way for Sikh ascendancy came now the fourth invasion of Ahmad Shah Durrani. As soon as he heard of the capture of Lahore by the Government of Delhi, he hastened to the Punjab in the autumn of 1755. Adeena Beg fled to the hills. Leaving his assistant in Lahore, the invader at once marched towards Sirhind and Delhi. He plundered the capital, took Hazrat Begum, a daughter of Muhammad Shah, into marriage, married his son to another princess, levied heavy contributions upon the courtiers and appointing Najib-ud-Daulah, a Rohilla chieftain, to be the commander-in-chief of Moghul forces on his behalf he left Delhi, looting the towns of Mathura and Agra, perpetrating wholesale massacres and carrying away thousands as slaves.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

When passing through the Punjab his rear was attacked by the Sikhs, the stragglers were put to the sword and his baggage plundered and carried away by them. He was greatly incensed at the insolence of the Sikh marauders, but a rebellion having meanwhile broken out in Turkistan, he hurried back to Kabul in 1757, leaving his son, Tymur, under the guardianship of Jahan Khan, in charge of the Punjab.

Tymur had now two enemies to suppress. Adeena who had been guilty of betraying his master to the Delhi Government and the Sikhs who had looted his father's baggage, and were even then carrying fire and sword into the Muhammadan territory.

The Sikhs were the first to receive his attention. Jassa Singh, the carpenter, had restored Ram Rowni at Amritsar under its new name, Ram Garh.[1] The place was attacked, the fortress was razed to the ground, the sacred buildings were demolished and the 'tank of nectar' was filled up with their ruins. The Sikhs fled to the hills burning with rage at the insult done to their religion.

Adeena Beg had meanwhile turned out Nasir Ali, the Durrani Deputy in Jullundur,

---

1. It was from this fortress that the confederacy founded by Jassa Singh took its name. All Sikh carpenters affect to call themselves Ram Garhias, as all *Kalals* call themselves Ahluwalias from the village, Ahlu, near Lahore, the home of their Chief.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

with the help of the Sikhs who now formed the best part of his troops and had established himself in his old province.

Prince Tymur, therefore, next turned his attention to him. He was summoned to Lahore but being sure of the treatment in store for him he excused himself on the ground of the Sikh disturbances, which he urged were so serious that his absence from his province would be fatal. Prince Tymur, consequently, sent a detachment of troops under Murad Khan to bring him to book. Adeena opposed him with his Sikhs and inflicted a complete defeat upon the Lahore troops. The incensed prince put the defeated general to death on suspicion of treahery, and marched in person to chastise Adeena Beg. Finding himself incapable of resistance, the latter fled to the hills of Nalagarh and hid himself there.

The Sikhs had also taken shelter in the hills. The baffled rebels now met together in exile and concerted a plan to attack the Durrani Governor of Lahore. The Sikhs, who were already burning with revenge and wanted only some recess and encouragement, now girt up their loins and descended from the hills with a fixed determination to destroy the Durrani tyrant or be destroyed in the attempt. They divided themselves into two sections, one under the leadership of the celebrated Jassa Singh Kalal and the other under Jassa Singh Ram Garhia and Adeena Beg. The first

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

detachment marched towards Lahore. The surrounding country began to swarm with horsemen. It was a religious war and all the followers of Gobind assembled to revenge the insult offered to their religion. Jahan Khan came out to meet them and succeeded at first in dispersing them, but the Sikhs soon assembled again in larger numbers, surrounded the city, cut off all communication and began to collect the revenues of the country around Lahore and dispose of it as they liked.[1] After many skirmishes a decisive action was fought early in 1758. "The Pathans were completely routed, and this was the first decisive victory on record achieved by the Sikhs over the Afghans."[2]

The other section of the Khalsa army was crowned with similar success in the Jullundur Doab. The Afghan general Sarfaraz Khan was defeated and his army dispersed. Prince Tymur and Jahan Khan, his guardian, were now reduced to straits, and finding it hopless to contend against the ever-increasing numbers of the Sikhs sought their safety in escape to the Chenab. "They retreated in the night, unknown even to their Hindustani troops whom they distrusted, and in such haste that the royal family fell into the hands of the enemy, though they were subsequently released."[3]

---

1. Syed Muhammad Latif, p. 230.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Syed Muhammad Latif, p. 230.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

The triumphant Sikhs now occupied Lahore under the leadership of Jassa Singh Kalal who now assumed the sovereignty[1] of the country. They used the old mint of the Moghuls to coin a rupee bearing the Persian inscription, meaning "Coined by the grace of God in the country of Ahmad, captured by Jassa Kalal."[2]

This was the first time the Sikhs became sovereign power in the Punjab, though as we shall see, some time was yet to elapse before that Province passed permanently into their hands.

---

1. His followers called him "Padshah" or King, but the Sikhs never regarded him as such, nor did he claim any superiority over the Khalsa.

2. Sikka zad dar jahan bafazl-i-Akal, Mulk-i-Ahmad girift Jassa Kalal.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

1762 Wada Ghallughara

CHAPTER XVI

Sikhs become a Sovereign Power

(1758-1768)

The Sikhs had taken Lahore, but their time had not yet come to rule as a sovereign power.

Adeena Beg, who had so far been using the Sikhs as his tools, as he imagined, was extremely disappointed and surprised to find himself chucked off by them, as he had fancied that the Sikhs were fighting for him, and that the chief authority would be vested in him. The Mahrattas had already come to Delhi at the invitation of Wazir Ghazi-ud-Din. Adeena Beg, therefore, waited upon Raghoba and invited him to extend the Mahratta arms to the Indus. He had some Sikh troops still under his control and with these he marched from Jumna in company with Raghoba. Sarhind was taken and the Durrani Governor Samundar Khan expelled from it. The Sikhs, however, let themselves loose on the city which they considered their birth-right and a meritorious deed to plunder in order to revenge the assassination of their Guru's infant sons perpetrated there. The Mahrattas who

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

were deprived of their share of the loot were incensed and turned out the Sikhs who fled also from Lahore on the approach of the Mahrattas Adeena Beg erected a lofty and magnificent platform in the Shalamar gardens at a cost of Rs. 1,25,000 on which Raghoba was seated. The gardens were illuminated and the fountains made to play rose-water. The Durrani Prince and his guardian Jahan Khan left the Punjab and Mahratta flag began to wave in Lahore, Multan and Attock. Ramji Shamji was appointed Governer of Multan and Sahiba Patel the Governor of Attock, while the Viceroyalty of Lahore was conferred upon Adeena Beg.[1]

The Sikhs, though expelled from Lahore, had not been idle. Under capable and daring leaders like the two Jassa Singhs, Hari Singh Bhangi, Jai Singh Kanhia, Hira Singh Nikai, Khushal Singh Faizulpuria, Alla Singh Phulkia and Charat Singh Sukerchakia, the grandfather of Ranjit Singh, they were supreme everywhere, committing depredations in all parts of the country unchecked. Adeena, however, no longer depending on the support of the Sikhs turned upon his old

---

1. *Ibrat Nama* of Ali-ud-Din states that Adeena got the viceroyalty of Jullundur Doab while Lahore was given over to Mirza Khan who was soon dismissed to make room for Bapoo Rao Dadoo and Sheesha Pandit. It seems, however, certain that Adeena held Lahore for a few months until his death in the end of 1758.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

friends. He wanted to punish them for their arrogance and disregard of himself, as well as to stop their present inroads and exactions. The greatest trouble was being caused in the Majha country. The Sikhs had rebuilt the temple and cleared the sacred tank at Amritsar[1] and were meting out the same treatment to the Muhammadans as they had received at their hands.[2] Adeena Beg, therefore, sent a strong body of cavalry under Mir Aziz Bakhshi with orders to destroy the Sikhs wherever they could be found. Syed Muhammad Latif, quoting from the contemporary memoirs of Maulvi Muhammad Din of Batala, (Adeena's headquarters for a time) says: "Four thousand pioneers accompanied the Mir, with their sharpened tools, for the purpose of clearing the jungle where the Sikhs had concealed themselves. Thousands of Sikhs were thus hunted down and mercilessly butchered. The more adventurous fled and sought shelter within the mud fort of Ram Rawni (now Ramgarh). The principal refugees were Nodh Singh Ram Gurhia, Jassa Singh and Malla Singh and Tara Singh, his brothers, Jai Singh Kanhia and Amar Singh Kingra." They were,

---

1. Mufti Ali-ud-Din says, the buildings, etc., were restored by the Mahrattas.

2. The Muhammadans were employed at the point of the bayonet to clear the tank, etc., which their co-religionists had devastated.—Syed Muhammad Latif.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

however, soon hunted out and dispersed with great slaughter.

Adeena died at the end of 1758 and the ever-vigilant Sikhs became active again. Jassa Singh the carpenter with Jai Singh Kanhia, on the one hand, and Jassa Singh Kalal, on the other, were carrying the flag of the Khalsa into new territories. In the meantime the news of the expulsion of his son by the Sikhs and the occupation of Lahore by the Mahrattas having reached Ahmad Shah, he came down once more in the winter of 1759 to recover his lost province. The Mahratta Governors evacuated the Punjab on his approach. He appointed Haji Karim Dad Khan as temporary Governor of Lahore and hastened to Delhi to punish the Wazir Ghazi-ud-Din and reduce the Mahrattas. He was occupied with the Mahrattas up to the beginning of 1761 when the great battle of Panipat was fought.

The absence of the Durrani and his deputies, with nearly every available soldier towards Delhi, had left the Punjab an easy prey in the hands of the Sikhs.[1] The principal Sikh chiefs, *viz.*, Jassa Kalal, Chet Singh Kanhia, Hari Singh Bhangi, Gujar Singh Bhangi and Lahna Singh Bhangi assembled at

---

1. Even the newly appointed Governor of Lahore, Karim Dad, and the Governor of Pasrur, had been summoned to Panipat. Lahore was then left in charge of Amir Muhammad Khan as officiating Governor.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Amritsar on the Baisakhi day (middle of April 1760). A Council was held, an attack on Lahore was decided upon, and the chiefs standing before their sacred book, prayed for success in the expedition. Soon after, they collected their forces and fell upon the defenceless city. The fortifications were burnt and the town was given over to plunder. The citizens, however, made their submission and waited upon the victors in a deputation consisting of Pirzada Ghulam Hussain Sarhindi, Mian Muhammad Naqi, Mir Nathu Shah, Mian Shahr Yar, Hafiz Qadir Bakhsh and others. A *nazrana* (or tribute money) of Rs. 30,000 was offered, and the Sikhs, knowing the Durrani might soon return, left the city with their spoils.[1]

The Sikhs next turned their attention to the Parganahs or outlaying districts. One detachment under Jassa Singh carpenter and Jai Singh Kanhia took Batala, Kalanaur, Hargovindpore, Qadian and most of the other towns in the Amritsar and Gurdaspore Districts, yielding a revenue between six and ten lakhs.[2] Another section of the Khalsa Army, under Jassa Singh Kalal plundered Sa hind and Diralpore, seized Dogar and Nypal in the Ferozepore District where he built fortified posts. He also annexed Hoshiarpore

---

1. *Ibrat Nama* of Ali-ud-Din.
2. Syed Muhammad Latif.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

and a part of the Ambala District, and laid Rai Ibrahim Bhatti, the Muhammadan chief of Kapurthala under contribution ∫ The Abdali returned from Delhi in the spring of 1761. The Punjab was ceded to him, and though he had heard everything about the depredations of the Sikhs in Lahore and the outlaying country, he did not stop to chastise them. He appointed Zen Khan, Governor of Sarhind, Sarbuland Khan to the charge of Multan and Khwaja Obed Khan to the Viceroyalty of Lahore and left for Kabul in May 1761.

No sooner did the Durrani turn his back upon India than the Sikhs set to work again. Bhima Singh and Sarup Singh began to build forts in the neighbourhood of Lahore, while Charat Singh, the grandfather of Ranjit Singh, threw up a mud fortress at Gujranwala, forty miles north of Lahore,[1] and Sikh fortresses began to appear like mushrooms in all parts of the Punjab.

The Abdali King had wisely contented himself with the Punjab, ceded to him by the Delhi Government in 1761, but even the Punjab now seemed to be slipping from his hands. Finding the Sikhs supreme everywhere, he sent one of his trusted generals Nur-ud-Din Khan Bamizai with a strong

---

1. *Ibrat Nama.* Ali-ud-Din.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

force to reduce them to order. A desperate action was fought in the beginning of 1762 in which the Afghans were defeated and shut up in the fort of Sialkot and were from thence expelled and driven to the hills of Jammu.

The Sikhs now became very bold, stopped and intercepted all revenues.[1] Being reduced to such straits, the Durrani Governor of Lahore marched upon Gujranwala with a large force and twelve pieces of cannon, about the middle of 1762. Baba Sham Singh who was revered by the Sikhs as a descendant of the Gurus was at that time a prisoner with Obed Khan. When the Lahore army neared Gujranwala, the Sikhs[2] met it with 1,500 horsemen and began negotiations with Obed Khan about the release of the holy man, while Charat Singh with only 25 men remained in the fort. The night having fallen in the meantime an alarm was spread in the Afghan army and fearing a night attack[3] the Afghans fled in all directions, leaving their baggage and guns, etc , to be plundered by the Sikhs. Sahib Singh, one of the Lahore Generals, deserted the Afghans and joined the Sikhs with his troops. Diwan Suba Rai and Hari Ram Chobdar (Gentleman Usher) were killed,

---

1. *Ibrat Nama.* Ali-ud-Din.

2. Under Jassa Singh Ahlowaha and Hari Singh and Gujjar Singh Bhangi, *Ibrat Nama. Ibid.*

3. Latif says the attack was actually made.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

while Obed Khan fled to Jukalian under cover of night, and attended by three or four hundred horsemen of Mian Khan Chattha escaped to Lahore from whence he did not venture out again for one whole year.[1]

'After this victory, the Sikhs assembled at Amritsar, performed ablutions in the sacred tank and held the first[2] regular 'Gurmata' or State Council. Hingan Khan of Malerkotla had helped the Governor of Sarhind during Jassa Kalal's attack upon that city. It was decided to punish him first of all and then chastise Akil Das, the Abbot of Jandiala, for his treason against the Khalsa and adherence to the Durrani King.

The possessions of Hingan Khan were ravaged and Jandiala was besieged. Jassa Singh Ramgarhia, who had already served the Muhammadans for many years, seems to have been anxious to preserve friendly relations with the Durrani King. He had, therefore, secretly informed the Mahant of Jandiala that the storm was going to burst upon him. The latter sent an urgent petition to Ahmad Shah

---

1. *Ibrat Nama.* Ali-ud-Din Mufti.

2. Malcolm says, the very first was held by Guru Govind Singh himself. After his death, I think, the first council of this kind was held on Baisakhi 1760 before attacking Lahore. See *supra.*

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

depicting his pitiable condition and praying for timely help[1]

The Durrani hastened to India once more and reached Lahore at the end of 1762. The Sikhs fled at his approach and crossed the Sutlej with the intention of aiding their brethern who were besieging Zen Khan, the Durrani Governor of Sarhind. The Abdali made one of those rapid marches for which he was so famous, and covering a distance of nearly 150 miles in 2½ days, surprised the Sikhs near Ludhiana just when they were going to engage Zen Khan. A most desperate battle was fought, but the Sikhs were ultimately defeated, leaving thousands of dead on the field[2]. The losses of the Sikhs were so great that the disaster is still remembered as the

---

1. *Ibrat Nama* quotes a line presumably taken from the petition :—

Bar lab rasida janam to biya ki zinda manam,
Pas azan ki man namanam ba chi kar ai mara.

"My life is on my lips, come so that I may live; after I am no more, of what use wilt thou be to me"?

2. The number of the Sikh dead is variously given. Cunningham gives between 12 and 25 thousand; Tarikh-i-Ahmadi, 30,000; Latif would agree with Kanahya Lal who puts it at 24,000; Malcolm over 20,000; *Ibrat Nama* 30,000; Murray was assured by a Moslem soldier of Malerkotla who fought in the battle that only 12,000 Sikhs were killed and wounded.

(See Prinsep, p. 20)

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

great 'Ghullu Ghara' or the great holocaust. Alla Singh, the founder of the present ruling family of Patiala, was taken a prisoner at Burala and was brought in chains to Lahore. His wife, however, paid a heavy ransom of Rs, 4,00,000 and the Shah being pleased with the manly bearing of the captive chief released him at the intercession of the grand Wazir and restored him to his estates with the title of Raja. The conqueror then returned to the Punjab and visited Amritsar where some Sikhs had again assembled to celebrate the Diwali festival. On his approach they dispersed and the victorious Afghan gratified his own resentment and indulged the savage bigotry of his followers by destroying the renewed temples of Amritsar by polluting the pools with slaughtered cows by encasing numerous pyramids with the heads of decapitated Sikhs and by cleansing the walls of desecrated mosques with the blood of his infidel enemies."[1] An insurrection having in the meantime broken out in Kandhar, the Durrani appointed Kabuli Mal[2] to the Viceroyalty of Lahore and hastily retreated to his own kingdom in the beginning of 1763.

The Sikhs, though greatly weakened, were not cast down. "The Sikh nation," says Malcolm, "throughout their early history have always appeared like a suppressed flame to rise

---

1. Cunningham, p. 101.
2. A Brahman from Kabul; Hugel, p. 271.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

into higher splendour from every attempt to crush them." The feeling had now developed in them that they were a nation, and that they were no longer fighting as a band of robbers, hunted and hounded and harassed by the Government constituted by any law, but that they had as much right to the kingdom as any Muhammadan power, whom as in the case of the Durranis especially, they regarded as intruders and usurpers. They were at the same time fully conscious of their power and the elevation of Alla Singh to the dignity of a Raja had given them a further assurance that they were respected and feared even by the dreaded Durrani. They at once assembled in large numbers and fell upon Kasur and sacked it. The old chief of Malerkotla was the next to feel the edge of their wrath. Hingan was slain and Malerkotla plundered.

The Sikhs next marched upon Sarhind in December 1763 to settle their scores with Zen Khan, the deputy of Ahmad Shah. The two Jassa Singhs, Alla Singh, now Raja of Patiala, and the leaders of almost all the confederacies[1] joined in the expedition against this hated city. Zen Khan gave battle to the Khalsa army but he was slain with Lachhmi Narain, his second in command, and the whole country from the Sutlej to the Jumna fell into the hands of the Sikhs and was partitioned by the chiefs among

---

1. Cunningham puts the number of Sikh troops at 40,000 or thereabout.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

themselves.[1] Sarhind was destroyed and the ruins were purchased for Rs. 25,000 by Alla Singh from Bhai Budh Singh, an old companion of the last Guru, to whom the victors had assigned it as a gift Elated with their victory the Sikhs crossed the Jamna and swept through the country round Saharanpur. Najib-ud-Daulah who was then fighting the Jats of Bharatpore hastened to save his own possessions and succeeded in bribing the Sikhs out of his territory. He resumed his operations against the Jats and defeated them, killing their chief, the well-known Suraj Mal. The son of the deceased chief, however, besieged Delhi with the help of the Sikhs and the Mahrattas and reduced the Rohilla chief to great straits.

The news of the fall of Sarhind and the distress of his Rohilla agent brought the

1. "Tradition still describes," says Cunningham, "how the Sikhs dispersed as soon as the battle was won, and how, riding day and night, each horseman would throw his belt and scabbard, his artlcles of dress and accoutrement, until he was almost naked, into successive villages to mark them as his." These horsemen, says Mufti Ali-ud-Din, would first demand money from the Zamindars of the villages through which they passed. If no money was forthcoming they would ask for some gur (coarse sugar), failing that they would take some loaves of bread. The villagers laughed but the Sikh horseman soon returned and taking those petty offers as tokens of submission would establish his sway over each village through which he had ridden." Ali-ud-Din also gives the names of various towns and villages occupied by each chief after this great victory.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Durrani once more, for the seventh time, to India in the year 1764. The siege of Delhi was in the meantime raised owing to quarrels among the invaders, and rebellions having again broken out in Afghanistan, Ahmad Shah did not make any attempt to recover Sarhind. He conferred the title of Maharaja on Alla Singh allowing him to coin money in his own name, and acknowledged him as Governor of Sarhind which he was to be supposed to hold on his behalf.

In the meantime the Sikhs had established their sway in the neighbourhood of Lahore. Kabuli Mal had been forced by them to punish the butchers who slaughtered cows in the city. The representative of Sardar Hari Singh Banghi, named Tek Chand, resided at the court of Lahore to direct the governor in the work of admin stration. Sobha Singh's Munshi sat with the Afghan officials at the Shah Alami Gate and received a fixed portion of the customs on his behalf. While passing through Lahore, on his way back, the Durrani King was appraised of this state of affairs and he chased the Sikhs to Kalanour where 1500 of their number were killed in a battle fought near Bulaki Chak, but he did not and could not do anything further to mend matters. Kabuli Mal continued as Governor, and the Shah precipitately left for his country

He had hardly turned his back when the Sikhs again swarmed near Lahore. Lehna

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Singh and Gujar Singh, both of the Bhangi clan, encamped with their troops at Baghbanpura, near Lahore, and concocted a plot with Sultan, Ghulam Rasul, Ashra, Channu and Bagar, the *arains* of the village who served as gardeners in the fort. Nand Ram Purbia, the *thanadar* (commander) of the fort also was won over. The wall of the fort was broken at night and Gujar Singh entered into the fort with fifty chosen warriors. According to a previous arrangement, the pavilion where Ahmad Shah used to put up during his stay in Lahore was set on fire to give a signal to Lahna Singh who was waiting outside with the main body of troops. The whole Khalsa army then rushed in. Kabuli Mal was away. Amar Singh his nephew and Jagannath his son-in-law showed some resistance but they were soon overpowered and the Khalsa flag was planted on the citadel.[1] The city was given over to plunder, which was stopped after some time at the intercession of some Hindu and Muhammadan *reises*.[2] The town and the country around were divided into three lots, south of Lahore up to Niaz Beg falling to the share of Sobha Singh, Kabuli Mal's Haveli with the eastern city was assigned to Gujar

---

1. See *Ibrat Nama* of Ali-ud-Din for a further account of this interesting *coup d'tat et-main.*

2. *E.g.*, Chaudhari Roopa, Lala Bishan Singh, Maharaj Singh, Hafiz Qadir Bakhsh and Mir Nathu Shah, the last a saint of great reputation. *Ibrat Nama.*

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Singh,[1] while Lehna Singh occupied the fort and the Royal Mosque.[2] This conquest carried the Sikh possessions up to the banks of the Jhelum, so that the whole country between the Jumna and the above-mentioned river now formed the commonwealth of the Khalsa.

The Sikh confederates then held a national council at Amritsar in 1765, and by a decree of the Khalsa proclaimed their own religion as supreme. The assumption of sovereignty was marked by the striking of a coin bearing the Persian inscription.

"Degh o Tegho Fataho Nusrat Bedarang,
Yaft az Nanak Guru Govind Singh."

which means "Guru Govind Singh received from Nanak, Grace, Power and rapid victory."

Nearly two years passed in peace and tranquillity. In 1767, however, the Abdali descended once more upon the plains of India to make a final effort to recover the Punjab, the richest province in his dominions. He was, however, growing old, was already suffering from cancer of the nose and the Sikhs had become by that time the masters of the country from the Jumna to the Jhelum. There was, therefore, no chance of recovering the lost province by force of arms. Consequently he tried to

---

1. An eastern suburb of Lahore is still called Qilla (or Fort) Gujar Singh.

2. Which, of course, ceased to be a mosque, and formed part of Sikh Magazine up to 1849 A.D.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

preserve his sway by conciliation. The Sikh rulers of Lahore had fled at his approach. When he reached Lahore he summoned Lehna Singh.[1] but the latter did not comply. Dadan Khan was appointed Governor of Lahore,[2] Shuja Khan that of Multan and Amar Singh son of Alla Singh, confirmed in the sovereignty of Patiala and Sarhind. A detachment of his troops[3] at this point deserted him and returned to Kabul, and fearing some mischief at home Ahmad Shah precipitately followed them

---

1. "A deputation of Lahore citizens waited upon His Majesty and told him that Lehna Singh was a very good and sympathetic ruler. In spite of his power he never made any distinction between the Hindus and the Mussulmans. On the day of *Id-ud-Duha* he bestowed turbans on the Qazi, the Mufti and the Imams of the mosques and held all the citizens in great regard. Ahmad Shah regretted that such a popular ruler should have fled away. He then wrote to Lehna Singh offering him the Governorship of Lahore with great honours, but the latter declined stating that he would fall in the eyes of his co-religionists if he accepted His Moslem Majesty's offer."

Ibrat Nana. Ahmad Shah also sent him a present of fruits, but he returned it saying that fruits were a luxury for Kings, he was a humble peasant and gram was the best food for him.—Syed Muhammad Latif.

2. Daud Khan, according to Syed Muhammad Latif.

3. Twelve thousand according to Cunningham and Latif and Hugel; only 400 or 500 according to *Ibrat Nama.*

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

home.[1] He had hardly turned his back upon Lahore when the Sikhs followed in his footsteps, harassing his rear and plundering his baggage. As soon as he crossed the Indus, the Sikhs, led by Charat Singh and others stormed the fort of Rohtas and turned out Sarfraz Khan, the Durrani governor. The three joint rulers of Lahore had accupied it again and the fall of Rohtas extended the Khalsa dominions to the banks of the Indus. Thus, in 1768, the Khalsa commonwealth extended from the Jamna to the Indus. The seed sown by Nanak had now, thanks to the talents of his successors the great military genius of Govind and the unconquerable spirit of Banda, blossomed into a rich crop. The nation started with the rosary and ended by snatching the sceptre from the oppressing hand of its tyrannical masters. The political organisation of the Sikhs was now complete, and the sovereignty of the Land of the Five Waters had now permanently[2] passed to the children of the Khalsa to be kept in custody for a greater power which was after a century to mould its destinies for the future.

1. Cunningham is absolutely wrong in saying that he avoided Lahore during this invasion. See *Panth Prakash*, *Ibrat Nama* and *Syed Muhammad Latif*.

2. The Sikhs were a little disturbed in 1797 by the incursion of Shah Zaman, but it was only a passing storm and since 1768 the Sikhs had no external foe to contend with up to the time of Anglo-Sikh wars.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER XVII

The Punjab under the Misals

(1768-1798)

The Khalsa had now become the paramount power in the Punjab but it was far from being a consolidated power. The province was partitioned into as many as twelve independent States under Sikh rulers and the only bond of union among them was a common faith and common danger, when they presented a solid front to the enemy. Otherwise these States were quite independent of one another, and, as will be seen from the following pages, often at war with one another. Their possessions were constantly changing, so that it is absolutely impossible to give a political map of the Punjab of those days. Still there was some sort of Government, and some excellent political institutions flourished even under this Government. At any rate the Government of the Misals filled the gap between the end of the Moghul rule and the settled administration of Ranjit Singh. It seems, therefore, necessary to give a brief account of these Misals before making a review of the chief characteristics of the prominent institutions which were common to all the different confederacies.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

1. THE BHANGI MISAL (1716-1802).

The Bhangi Misal was founded by one Chhajja Singh, a Jat of Panjwar, near Amritsar. He had received the *pahul* from the hands of no less a personage than Banda himself, and it seems that the baptismal injunctions of the great leader had not been lost upon him. He organised a little band of Jats whom he had himself converted to Sikhism and began to make plundering excursions in the territories of the Moghul. It was, however, under the leadership of Bhim Singh that the confederacy assumed an organised form and rose to power. This Bhim Singh seems to have been an idle vagabond, addicted to and living by grinding *bhang*[1] in the Golden Temple before he was converted by Chhajja Singh and enlisted as a soldier It was now that his latent genius as an organiser and commander of men had a free play . Nadir Shah's invasion had produced a great commotion in the country and Bhim Singh took full advantage of it and turned the little band of marauders left by his predecessor into a powerful confederacy.

---

1. An intoxicating drug consisting of the leaves of a plant which grows wild on the banks of many rivers in the Punjab.

It was the *bhang* drinking habit of Bhim Singh that gave the confederacy its name.

Bhim Singh was a relation of Chhajja Singh and was a native of Kasur.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Bhim Singh was succeeded by his nephew and adopted son Hari Singh, a son of Bhup Singh, Zamindar of Patoh near Wadni. Hari Singh was richly endowed with all the gifts of a great soldier and able commander and under him the Bhangi Misal rose to great eminence, wealth and power.

He had an army of twenty thousand men and was at this time the most powerful Sikh Chief. He took Sialkot, Karial and Narowal, annexed Chiniot and Jhang. In 1762 he attacked Kot Khawja Said near Lahore and carried away all the munitions of war which Khawja Obed, the then Governor of Lahore, had deposited there. After this he led his troops beyond the Indus and swept through the Derajat division, looting and punishing the Muhammadan Chieftains for their bigotry and oppression. He took Rawalpindi[1] and subdued the whole Majha and Malwa tracts. He sacked Jammu and making Raja Ranjit Dev his tributary penetrated into Kashmir where, however, his arms received a check and he was repulsed with great loss. A detachment of the Misal headed by Rai Singh of Buria carried the flag of victory to the Jamna. Kasur which was strongly governed by a powerful Afghan had so far escaped the depredations of

---

1. The leader of this expedition was Sardar Milkha Singh, a native of Kaleki near Kasur, who afterwards founded the village of Thepur (Lahore District) and established himself there.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the Sikhs. In 1763, however, Hari Singh in conjunction with the Kanhia and Ramgarhia Misals attacked and reduced Kasur. In 1764 Hari Singh fell out with a fellow Sikh Chief, Amar Singh, the Raja of Patiala, and was killed in action.

Hari Singh was succeeded by his eldest son named Jhanda Singh under whom the Bhangi Misal reached the zenith of its power. In 1766 A. D. he led an expedition against Multan and the chief of Bahawalpore, but a treaty was concluded between them by which Jhanda Singh was acknowledged as the lord of the territories up to Pakpattan. In 1767 he built a fort behind the Lun Mandi in Amritsar which was long known as *Qilla-i-Bhangian* or the fort of *Bhangis*.[1]

In 1771 Multan was invaded again, but the invaders repulsed by the combined forces of Multan and Bahawalpore. The following year, however, a quarrel arose between the successive governors of Multan and one of them, Sharif Beg Taklu, summoned Jhanda Singh to his aid. The Sikh Chief welcomed this opportunity and hastened to Multan accompanied by Lehna Singh and other leading Chiefs of his Misal Shuja Khan and his allies the Daudpotras were defeated and Multan was

1. According to Latif (p. 297) this fort was built in 1772 after the conquest of Multan, but I think the version of Punjab Chiefs given above is more reliable.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

taken and retained by the Sikhs. Sharif Beg retired to Sindh and the Governorship of Multan was conferred on one Diwan Singh, a lieutenant of Jhanda Singh.

The same year Jhanda Singh attacked Ramnagar, the capital of the Chatthas in the Gujranwala district and took possession of the famous gun known as the Zamzama or *Top Bhangian*. Next year the quarrel between Ranjit Dev of Jammu and his son Brij Raj Dev took all the important Sikh Chiefs there and Jhanda Singh who sided with Ranjit Dev was assassinated in 1774 by a Mazhabi Sikh who had been bribed by the Kanhias who, along with Charat Singh Sukerchakia, had sided with the rebel son of Ranjit Dev.

Ganda Singh, his younger brother, succeeded Jhanda Singh and strengthened the Bhangi fort at Amritsar and enlarged and beautified the holy city. He was constantly thinking of avenging his brother's death on the Kanhias and a pretext for hostilities was soon found. Pathankot was held by the widow of Nand Singh, a Misaldar of Jhanda Singh, and this lady married her daughter to one Tara Singh, a scion of the Kanhia Misal and bestowed the estate of Pathankot upon her as a dowry. Ganda Singh wanted it back. The Kanhias refused to surrender it and a battle was fought at Dina Nagar. Ganda Singh fell ill, and died and his nephew and successor Charat Singh was killed in an engagement at

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Pathankot. The Bhangis, disheartened at the death of their leaders, fled from the field of battle, leaving the whole territory of Pathankot to the Kanhias.

The Bhangis now elected, as their Chief, Desa Singh, the minor son of Ganda Singh who had been passed over owing to his tender years The Misal now got out of control. Many Sardars became independent. Jhang and Multan[1] were lost. Desa Singh tried to recover the Jharg territory but while fighting there he came in collision with Mahan Singh, the father of Ranjit Singh, and was killed in battle in 1782

He was succeeded by Gulab Singh, his minor son, who was given over to luxury and debauchery. The only achievement to his credit is that he once more reduced Kasur, though it was again recovered by the Pathans, Nizam-ud-Din Khan and Kutb-ud-Din Khan, in 1794. He also entered into a Cabal which consisted of himself, Sahib Singh Bhangi,

---

1. Multan had been attacked by Muzaffar Khan and the Nawab of Bahawalpore in 1777, but Diwan Singh had repulsed them. The following year Timur, the son of Ahmad Shah Durrani, had sent an army to reduce Multan, but even this had been routed by Diwan Singh. The King now took the field in person with 18,000 Afghan troops. The Sikhs were defeated after a desperate battle in which they lost more than 3,000 men. Multan was bestowed by the King on Shuja Khan, its old Governor, who ruled there till Ranjit Singh expelled him.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Singh Ramgarhia, and Nizam-ud-Din Khan of Kasur with the object of assassinating Ranjit Singh who had just taken Lahore in 1799 They summoned him in 1800 to Bhasin with the ostensible object of consulting him as to an important matter of national concern. Ranjit attended but he brought a large army with him. The plot was abandoned and the chiefs engaged in feasting during which Gulab Singh who was a great drunkard, caught *delirium tremens* and died. His minor son, Gurdit Singh, succeeded him, but Ranjit Singh who had always had a greedy eye on Amritsar demanded the big *Bhangi Top* from him which his mother, Sukhan, who was his guardian, refused to surrender. This was a sufficient plea for Ranjit Singh to declare war on the Bhangi Misal. Amritsar was attacked and the Bhangi fort was reduced in less than five hours. The mother and the son fled and took shelter with Sardar Jodh Singh. Gurdit afterwards repaired to his native village Panjwar in the Tahsil of Tarn Taran where he died. His descendants still exist and like ordinary peasants live by tilling the soil with their own hands.

THE SECOND BRANCH OF THE BHANGI MISAL

The second branch of the Bhangi Misal also rose to great power and has left a mark in Sikh history. The leaders of this branch were

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Lehna Singh and Gujar Singh, some of whose achievements have been already recorded.

The grandfather of Lehna Singh was an ordinary Jat of Sadowala Being reduced to extremely straitened circumstances he went to Mastipur, near Kartarpur, and was adopted there by a carpenter as his son. A son named Dargaha was born to him there and Lehna Singh was the son of this Dargaha Lehna was quite a boy when he ran away from home and reaching the village Roranwala, near Attari, entered into service with Sardar Gurbakhsh Singh who was one of the principal misaldars of Hari Singh Bhangi. Gurbakhsh had no son and adopted Lehna. Gujar Singh, the other leader of this branch, was a grandson of Sardar Gurbakhsh Singh, being his daughter's son. At the death of the Sardar a quarrel arose between Gujar Singh and Lehna Singh, but after some fighting they came to terms and divided the estates of the late Sardar half and half.

In 1765 they joined Sobha Singh and took Lahore where, as described in the last chapter, they ruled with some intermissions until their death. After Lehna Singh's death in 1797 his son, Chet Singh, succeeded to his possessions but was turned out by Ranjit Singh[1]

---

1. Being disgusted with the imbecility of Chet Singh and Mohar Singh (son of Sobha Singh) three of the leading reises of Lahore *viz.*, Bhai Gurbakhsh Singh, *Hakim* Hakim Rai and Mian Ashiq Muhammad sum-

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

in 1799. His son, Atar Singh, became a vassal of Ranjit Singh and was alive in 1849 when the village of Chak Dido which formed a part of his jagir was allowed to him and his mother by the British Government. There is no trace to be found of the successors of Atar Singh with whom it seems Lehna Singh's line ended.

Gujar Singh was a much more powerful chief. After the conquest of Lahore he marched northwards and annexed Gujrat, which he conquered from Sultan Mukkarab, a Ghakkhar Chief. In 1766, he reduced Jammu and along with Jhanda Singh took tribute from the Raja of that place. The same year he took Poonch, Islamgarh and Dewabotala. In 1767 he went to Amritsar and founded a fort named Qilla Gujar Singh after him on the site where Govindgarh now stands.[1] Gujar Singh had three sons, Sukha Singh, Sahib Singh, Fateh Singh. Sukha Singh was killed in a battle with Sahib Singh. Sahib Singh was married to

---

moned Ranjit Singh to Lahore. Ranjit Singh came with a large army and as previously arranged, Chaudhri Mohkum Din of Nawankot opened the Lohari Gate by which Ranjit Singh entered the town.

1. Amritsar had four forts. In the north, Charat Singh had built one and in the South the Bhangis. Jassa Singh Ramgarhia had one in the east and Gujar Singh now built one in the west. This fact gives a glimpse into the federal character of Sikh Government before Ranjit Singh.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Mahan Singh's sister, *i.e.* an aunt of Ranjit Singh and displeased his father by surrendering a Muhammadan Chief to his brother-in-law against the wishes of his father Gujar Singh with whom the Muhammadan Chief had taken refuge during the war of Ramnagar. As this Chief was put to death, Gujar Singh retired from the siege and making over his possessions to Fateh Singh died of rage and grief shortly after at Lahore in 1788 and his ashes were buried under the Sammanburj of the Lahore fort.

Fateh Singh's nomination as Gujar Singh's successor was not approved of by the Khalsa. So they elected Sahib Singh as their leader. Mahan Singh, to serve his own ends, sided with Fateh Singh against his own sister's husband and a battle was fought in 1792 at Sodhra between Sahib Singh and Mahan Singh in which Mahan Singh fell ill and retired, leaving the field to the Bhangi chief. Sahib Singh ruled over his territories successfully for many years and was one of the Sikh Sardars[1] who in 1798 defeated Shahnchi whom Shah Zaman had left with a force of 7,000 strong to subdue the Punjab. Afterwards, in 1800 as narrated above, he joined a conspiracy to kill Ranjit Singh but became a friend of his at Bhasin. By 1806 he had become a vassal

---

1. The others were Nihal Singh and Wazir Singh, both of Atari, Jodh Singh of Wazirabad and Karm Singh of Dhillwan.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

of the Maharaja who gave him in 1810 a jagir of one lakh of rupees which he enjoyed till his death in the following year. Fateh Singh went to Kapurthala and entered the Raja's service there. He died soon after leaving a son named Jaimal Singh who died in 1871 a very poor man. Jaimal's son was Jwala Singh who had a son named Budh Singh, the last known representative of the family.

II THE AHLUWALIA MISAL.

The Ahluwalia Misal was founded by Jassa Singh Kalal. His parents belonged to the village Ahlu. His mother was a sister of Bhag Singh, *a* daring free-looter, who had received the *pahul* from Bhai Mani Singh Jassa Singh who was born in 1718 inherited all the qualities of his maternal uncle and in his day became one of the greatest Sikh Chiefs and in one respect the most remarkable of them. In 1748 Jassa Singh boldly proclaimed the birth of a new power in the State "The Dul of the Khalsa" or the army of the theocracy of Singhs. It was he who first gave the character of royalty to the Khalsa as he was the first among the Sikhs to strike a coin in his own name.

"Coined by the grace of God in the country of Ahmed, conquered by Jassa Kalal."

He was a man of great military talents and though he had begun his career as a trooper of Nawab Kapur Singh he set up his

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org



H. H. The Maharaja of Kapurthala,
Present Head of the Ahluwalia Misal.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org



Baba Kharak Singh,

Leader of the Non-Akali Party of the Sikhs.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

independence after the Nawab's death and soon conquered Ahlu, Sariala, Sillewala, Bhupala, Gogarwal, etc. On the other side of the Beas he took Sultanpore, Talwandi, and levied tribute from Rai Ibrahim of Kapurthala which he annexed in 1780 making it his head-quarters. On the other side of the Sultej he held Isa Khan and Jigraon, and was considered the greatest Chief in Bist Jullundur. He was called King (Padsha) by his followers though not by the general body of the Khalsa, and was a man of very generous habits enriching his followers with liberal gifts. He was a great patriot and always ready to risk his life and liberty for the sake of his countrymen and for his own faith. Once upon a time Ahmad Shah was carrying away as a *prize* a large number of women and girls from India. News was brought to Jassa Singh. He started in pursuit of the Shah and making a successful night attack upon his camp rescued the innocent creatures and providing them liberally with money and other necessaries sent them all under proper escort to their respective homes. From that day Jassa Singh came to be called Band.-chhor or liberator. This act of chivalry and patriotism not only endeared Jassa Singh to all classes of Hindus and increased his power and influence but also tended to enhance the prestige and popularity of the Sikhs. By the general concurrence of the Khalsa, Jassa Singh in Aptil 1764 laid the foundation of Harmander which had been blown up by the vindictive Durrani.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Jassa Singh died at Amritsar in 1783, and was succeeded by Bhag Singh, second cousin of his. This Chief did not acquire any new territory but was most of the time engaged in fighting with the rival Chief, Jassa Singh Ramgarhia. His General, Hamir Singh was defeated by the Ramgarhias in 1801. He hastened to Phagwara but fell ill on the way and was brought back to Kapurthala where he died the same year. His Mausoleum, near Devi Talab stands to the present day.

Fateh Singh, his only son, succeeded to the estate of Bhag Singh. He was a remarkably able man and if he had possessed the bold and masterful character of Ranjit Singh, he would have been the Maharaja of the Punjab. Ranjit Singh recognised his great qualities of head and heart and made an early alliance with him. The two Chiefs swore perpetual friendship on the Granth and exchanged turbans which according to the orthodox usage, formed a sign and tie of brotherhood. Fateh Singh proved of great help to Ranjit Singh and conquered a large territory for him. Fateh Singh has been the ladder by which Ranjit Singh mounted to greatness. On the 1st of January 1806 a treaty of amity and friendship was signed between the Honourable East India Company as represented by Lord Lake and Fateh Singh representing both the Kapurthala State and the Lahore kingdom. Kapurthala was thus the first in the field of alliance with the British Government in the North. After a strenuous

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

career of warfare on behalf of the Maharaja he reigned peacefully during the last sixteen or seventeen years of his life in Kapurthala where he died in 1837. His descendants have been ruling in the Kapurthala State ever since that year as the faithful allies of the English Government.[1]

III. THE RAMGARHIA MISAL

Jassa Singh, a carpenter by caste, was the founder of this Misal. His father Bhagwana had been a poor carpenter but a zealous Sikh, called for his knowledge of the Granth, Bhagwana Gyani. He had five sons, Tara Singh, Mali Singh, Khushal Singh, Jassa Singh and Jai Singh. Jassa Singh and his brothers were at first in the service of Adeena Beg, the

---

1. During the second Sikh War, Nihal Singh rendered great help to the English and in recognition of meritorious services, the title of Raja was conferred on him.

During the Mutiny of 1857 the ruler of Kapurthala rendered much assistance to the British Government. In consideration of that help a big Taluqa with a revenue of about twenty lacs was granted to him and is still held by the State.

The present head of the Ahluwalia Misal and the Kapurthala State is His Highness Maharaja Jagatjit Singh, a highly cultured Prince who has travelled far and wide and enjoys great popularity with the Princely order as well as the general public. During his regime the State has made notable progress all round, particularly in industrial development.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Foujdar of Jullundur Doab, and Jassa Singh held the command of Adeena's Sikh contingent. When Prince Tymur came to Jullundhur, Adeena fled to the hills and Jassa Singh and his brothers went to Amritsar and entered the service of Nand Singh Sanghani. Nand Singh and Jassa Singh restored the fortress of Ram Rauni, but it was destroyed by Adeena's general Mir Aziz Bakhsh who was sent to punish the Sikhs for their disregard of him after the conquest of Lahore in 1758. He, however, died the same year and Jassa Singh rebuilt the fortress and now called it Ramgarh from which the name of the Misal is derived. Jassa now combined with the Kanhias and took Dinanagar, Batala, Kalanaur, Sri Hargovindpore, Qadian, Ghumman and many other towns of Amritsar and Gurdaspur districts and some territory in the Jullundur Doab. His revenue now amounted to between six and ten lakhs.

The rising power of Jassa Singh seems to have turned his brothers' heads. Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, at this time one of the most powerful and universally revered of Sikh Chiefs, was going on a pilgrimage when Khushal Singh, Mali Singh and Tara Singh fell upon him, robbed him and brought him home as a prisoner. He was enraged and swore that he would destroy the Ramgarhia Misal one day. Soon afterwards the Bhangis under Jhanda Singh, the Kanhias under Jai Singh and Hakikat Singh, Sukerchakias

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

under Charat Singh and Sardar Nahar Singh of Chimyari joined Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and defeated the Ramgarhias, driving Jassa Singh beyond the Sutlej. The Ramgarhia Chief settled in Sirsa where he remained up to 1783. He subsisted by robbery and extended his depredations upto Delhi. Once he fell upon the Moghul Muhalla in Delhi and carried away four guns with other booty. The Nawab of Meerut paid him a tribute of Rs. 10,000 to save his country from being plundered. He sacked Hissar and rescued two Brahmin girls from the Hakim of the place who had forcibly carried them away. He also found 5 lakhs of *Ashrafees* buried in a well in the same town. In 1783 famine and drought drove him back from Sirsa. Dissensions had meanwhile sprung up between Mahan Singh and Jai Singh. So he made common cause with Mahan Singh and Raja Sansar Chand Katoch who had been cheated of the Kangra fort by Jai Singh, and drove out the Kanhias recovering all his previous possessions.

In 1796 Ranjit Singh's mother-in-law Sadakaur whose husband Gurbakhsh Singh Kanhia had been killed in a battle with Jassa Singh Ramgarhia attacked Jassa Singh at Miani, in Hoshiarpore District with the aid of her son-in-law. Being hard pressed Jassa Singh entreated Baba Sahib Singh Bedi to intercede on his behalf, but the obstinate Sadakaur was obdurate and did not listen to the advice of the holy man. It is said that the Baba cursed

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

her. At any rate what happened was no less than miraculous. In a few days the river Beas was flooded and all the baggage of Sadakaur and his son-in-law was carried away and it was with difficulty that they themselves escaped with their lives.

Jassa Singh ruled in peace after this till 1803 when he died. His son Jodh Singh made his submission to Ranjit and became a vassal of the Maharaja in 1808. Jassa Singh's own descendants are not much heard of but his brother Tara Singh's family as represented by Sardar Mangal Singh, C.I.E., is very well-known in the Punjab.

IV. THE NAKAI MISAL

This Misal was founded by Hira Singh, son of Chaudhri Hem Raj, a Sindhu Jat of Bharwala, a village in the Chunian *Tahsil* of the Lahore District. Like most other founders of ruling families in the Punjab, he began his career as a free-booter and gradually conquered a territory which yielded him nine lakhs in revenue.

About 1767 complaints were brought to him by the Hindus of Pakpattan against Shaikh Shuja, the incumbent of the shrine of Baba Farid Shakarganj, who was notorious for injuring the feelings of the Hindus by the slaughter of cows. Hira Singh collected his troops and attacked the Shaikhs with a force of 2,000 men. Early in the engagement, however, he received a bullet-wound in the head

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

of which he died. His army was dispersed by the Shaikh who pursued the Sikhs with 4,000 horsemen and killed a large number of them.

Dal Singh, the minor son of Hira Singh, was passed over, and Nahar Singh, the son of his brother Natha Singh, succeeded to the Sardari. He was killed a few months after in 1768 in a battle at Kot Kamalia and was succeeded by his younger brother Ram Singh. Ram Singh and his successors passed their lives in fighting with Wazir Singh of Sayyad-wala and his descendants.

The Misal had ruled for about forty years over a territory consisting of Chunian, Kasur, Sharakpur, Gugera and at one time, Kot Kamalia. Gian Singh who had ascended the *gaddi* in 1790 married his sister Raj Kauran[1] to Ranjit Singh who became the mother of Kharak Singh. Gian Singh was the last independent Sardar of the Nakai Misal and three years after his death in 1807, Ranjit Singh took possession of their territories, leaving a jagir of Rs. 15,000 to Kahn Singh[2]

---

1. This is the lady who became known as Mai Nakain whose *Haveli*, now a plot of Nazul ground, was situated in Wachhowali, Lahore.

2. Kahn Singh died at Lahore in 1872. The family is now represented by Sardar Udham Singh of Bahrwal.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

son of Gian Singh, who was the last member of the Misal possessing any political importance.

V. THE KANHIA MISAL

The founder of this Misal was Jai Singh, son of a poor Sindhu Jat named Khushali, a native of Kanha, a village about fifteen miles from Lahore, which gave the Misal its name. Jai Singh had two brothers, Jhanda Singh and Singha, but the latter has left no mark in history though it is only his descendants who have survived. Jai Singh and Jhanda Singh took service with Nawab Kapur Singh, but when the Nawab died both the brothers went to Sohian, a village nine miles from Amritsar, where Jai Singh had been married. There he got together some four hundred horsemen and began to possess himself of the neighbouring country.

In 1763 he joined the leaders of the Ahluwalia, Bhangi, and Ramgarhia Misals in the siege and plunder of Kasur. He was present at the siege of Jammu and took part in the conspiracy hatched for the assassination of Jhanda Singh Bhangi. Having removed one formidable rival, Jai Singh made a league with Jassa Singh Ahluwalia to remove Jassa Singh Ramgharia against whom the Ahluwalia Chief had a score of his own to settle. The carpenter was driven to the wastes of Hansi and Hissar as shown above and Jai Singh now occupied almost the paramount position in the Punjab.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Next he marched to Sarhind and took part in the great battle in which Zen Khan, the Governor of Sarhind was defeated and slain and the city taken by the Sikhs. After this he took Garota, Hajipur, Nurpur, Datarpur and Saipah levying tribute from the Rajas of these hill States. He also took Mukerian reducing the Awan rulers of the place to subjection after a desperate struggle and great slaughter. Soon afterwards fortune placed another big prize in his way in the form of the famous Kangra fort. Raja Sansar Chand Katoch had always kept a greedy eye on this fort but Sef Ali, the Governor, claimed the protection of the Delhi Court which had deterred the Katoch from taking any steps to attack the fort. Jai Singh's fame was now on its zenith, so Sansar Chand sought his help and summoned him to assist him in the reduction of the fort. The Kanhia Chief lost no time in accepting the proposal and sent his son to the fort with a large army. The old Killadar died in 1774 and partly by force and partly by diplomacy[1] the fort was taken and retained for himself by the Sikh Chief. The Katoch was checkmated and greatly disappointed, but seeing no hope in resistance submitted to the Kanhia Chief. Kangra fort was the key[2]

---

1. Jiwan Khan, the son of Sef Khan, was bribed by Jai Singh.

2. The fort was more than a thousand years old. It had been repaired by Ranjit Singh and was in excellent condition until it was destroyed by the earthquake of 1905.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

to the whole Kangra valley and the possession of it made Jai Singh the sovereign lord of all the Rajas and Thakurs of the neighbouring States.

Jassa Singh carpenter and Jai Singh had been friends but a quarrel arose between them over the booty of Kasur, so that, as stated above, Jai Singh allied himself with the Chiefs of Ahluwalia and Bhangi clans and turned out the carpenter from the Punjab. Jai Singh, however, now created another enemy, possessing much more tact and far greater resources. This was no other than Mahan Singh, the father of Ranjit Singh. The quarrel arose over the booty of Jammu which was run over by Mahan Singh in 1780. The Kanhia Chief had always regarded Mahan Singh as a protege of his and the conquest and plunder of Jammu on his own account naturally incensed the old warrior. Mahan Singh was frightened and hastened to Amritsar to tender his apologies to Jai Singh, but the old Sardar covered his face with his *chadar* as he lay in his bed and refused to exchange a word with Mahan Singh.[1] Mahan Singh was on the point of being taken a prisoner when he was appraised of his dangerous situation. He fled from Amritsar and began to concert measures to take revenge upon his proud old patron. He found ready allies in Jassa Singh carpenter and Raja Sansar Chand Katoch who had been

1. Ali-ud-Din's *Ibratnamah*.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

cheated out of Kot Kangra by the Kanhia Sardar. A battle was fought in 1784 at Batala. The only son of Jai Singh was killed by an arrow of a follower of Guru Sundar Dass. Jai Singh was defeated and heart-broken and saw no alternative but to make peace with his enemies. He surrendered Kot Kangra to the Katoch Chief and restored the old possessions of Jassa Singh Ramgarhia while in order to secure the good will of Mahan Singh, he betrothed his little grand-daughter Mahtab Kaur to Ranjit Singh, the four year old son of Mahan Singh.

Jai Singh never recovered his former power and died in 1789. His daughter-in-law, Sada Kaur, succeeded to the Sardari. She was a most capable and statesmanlike woman and ruled her possessions with great ability till 1820 when her estates were annexed by her son-in-law Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Gurbakhsh Singh, the only son of Jai Singh, had no male issue and with his death the line of Jai Singh came to an end. Jai Singh's second brother, Jhanda Singh, had died in childhood, but his youngest brother Singha had a son Hem Singh whose descendants now represent the Kanhia Misal.

Sardar Kahn Singh is the head of the family and enjoys the villages of Rukhanwala in the Chunian colony as a jagir.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

VI. THE DALLEWALIA MISAL

The Misal was founded by one Golaba, a Khatri of Dallewal, a small village on the Ravi, near Dera Baba Nanak. He became a Sikh and having changed his name to Golab Singh he became like other founders of ruling families a robber. By this means he amassed immense wealth and collected a large body of troops with whose help he carved out a small principality for himself. His second in command was one Tara Singh *Ghaiba*, who succeeded him on his death. This Tara Singh seems to have been a very clever and enterprising man. He was only a shepherd by origin but even in that humble station he had given promise of his future greatness His village lay on one side of a deep ravine across which there was rich pasture land. He contrived to span over the glen by means of an improvised bridge of ropes over which he transported his flocks every morning and evening. This ingenious bit of engineering won for him the title of Ghaiba, the wonderful. When he succeeded to the Sardari of the Misal he joined the Bhangis and others in the expedition against Kasur and during the plunder of the town lighted upon ornaments worth four lakhs besides cash and other valuable property. He strengthened his Misal by converting Gauhar Das, the influential Chaudhri of Ganj who with all his followers took the *pahul* and joined the Dallewalia Misal. Tara Singh was also pre-

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

sent in the sack of Sarhind. He had now about 3,000 horsemen under his command and Fatehabad together with the whole of the neighbouring country was brought under subjection by him.

By this time, however, Ranjit Singh had begun the task of consolidating the Sikh empire and an expedition under Fateh Singh Ahluwalia was sent against the Dallewalia Chief. Tara Singh fled and was dispossessed of his estates which became a part of the Sikh Kingdom. On the death of Tara Singh his sons, Daswanda Singh and Chanda Singh, received some villages in jagir from Ranjit Singh but being dissatisfied with their conduct, the Maharaja confiscated their possessions and bestowed them upon Baba Bikrama Singh Bedi. The Misal then came to an end.

VII—THE NISHANWALIA MISAL

The importance of this Misal lay in the fact that its founder Sangat Singh of Ambala used to carry the national banner of the Sikhs whenever they assembled for a military operation. Sangat Singh had his possessions on the other side of the Sutlej and used to carry on depredations in the territory of the United Provinces. Mohar Singh succeeded Sangat Singh. But he died without accomplishing any thing notable. As he left no issue, the Misal was practically left without a leader. Just about that time Ranjit Singh was hovering about the banks of the Sutlej. He thought

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

this a capital opportunity and sent his famous General Mohkum Chand at the head of a strong force to reduce the Misal. The Dewan gained an easy victory. The Nishanwalias were driven from the field and the Misal ceased to exist. This was in the year 1808 A.D.

VIII—THE SINGHPURIA MISAL

This Misal was founded by the famous Nawab Kapur Singh. It has been mentioned above[1] how Kapur Singh, a poor Jat of Faizullahpur, rose to the position of one of the most powerful chiefs in the Punjab. The robes of honour and title of Nawab were sent by the Delhi Government to the Sikh assembly at Amritsar. No one would consent to accept either the title or the robes. Kapur Singh was moving the *pankha*. It was suggested half-jestingly that the title of Nawab should be conferred on him. He was then decorated with the robes of honour and since that moment became known as Nawab Kapur Singh. Jesters some times prove good prophets and the man's ambition and fortunes rose with the mock-dignity conferred on him by his brethren-in-arms. He got together a number of fighting men and wrested his native village of Faizullahpur from his founder and owner Faizullah and changed its name to Singhpur

---

1. See page 205 and Foot Note. Chapter XIII.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

which gave its name to the Misal.[1] He conquered the neighbouring country and raised the strength of his army to 2,500 horsemen who emulated their leader in reckless daring, fanaticism and ferocity. With the help of these ironsides he scoured the country from the outskirts of Amritsar to the walls of Delhi. As mentioned above he was the most powerful Sikh chief before Jassa Singh Kalal and Alla Singh of Patiala rose to eminence. He enjoyed a great reputation as being the holiest man among the Khalsa for having killed with his own hand as many as five hundred Mussalmans. It was considered of great merit to receive the *pahul* from his hand and there is no doubt that out of those initiated by him a large number rose to be powerful chiefs.

After Banda it was he who had organised the first regular Sikh army, called the Khalsa Dal, and it was his courage, earnestness and fanaticism which had inspired the Sikh leaders to carve out principalities for themselves. After him Sikh states rose like mushrooms all over the Punjab.

Nawab Kapur Singh died at Amritsar in 1753 bequeathing the honours which he enjoyed in the Sikh army to Jassa Singh Ahluwalia. He made over to him the steel

---

1. The Misal is sometimes also called Faizullahpuria, from the original name of the village. The village is situated near Amritsar.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

mace[1] of Guru Govind Singh and hailed him as the future leader of the Khalsa.

It was, however, his nephew, Khushal Singh, who succeeded to his territory. This chief equalled his uncle in wisdom and bravery and extended his conquests on both sides of the Sutlej. His possessions included Jullundur, Nurpur, Barhampur,Bharatgarh, Patti, etc. Like his illustrious predecessor he made many converts, Alla Singh, the Raja of Patiala, being one of them. Khushal Singh died in 1795 and was succeeded by his son Budh Singh. But Ranjit Singh was at this time absorbing all the petty Sikh States and the possessions of Budh Singh formed no exception. The whole of his territory on this side of the Sutlej was taken and the Sardar was obliged to retire to the British territory where he lived peacefully until his death in 1816.

IX—THE KARORA SINGHI MISAL

This Misal, also called Panjgarhia from the native village of its first leader, was founded by one Karori Mal, a Jat of Panjgarh.

He started as a robber of course and succeeded in founding a ruling family with the aid of his famous assistants Mastan Singh and Karm Singh. Having died childless, he was

---

1. This weapon is still kept in the Akal Bunga at Amritsar.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

succeeded by Bhagel Singh, who was the most daring and enterprising of his followers. The Misal attained to great power under this chief, the strength of the army rising to 12,000 strong and its possessions extending from the Sutlej to Jullundur, its chief place being Chandali, near Karnal.

From a national point of view, however, the name of Bhagel Singh is hardly honoured among the Sikhs He it was who first joined the Imperial army when Prince Jawan Bakht marched out against the Sikhs at the head of a force 20,000 strong. The Imperial army at first gained some victories but was ultimately routed by the combined troops of the Raja of Patiala and other Phulkian Chiefs, together with the forces of the Kanhia and Ramgarhia Misals. During this campaign lasting throughout the winter of 1778-79 Bhagel Singh always fought against his co-religionists on the side of the Government of Delhi.

Then again it was Bhagel Singh who welcomed and supported the Mahrattas when they invaded the Sikh territories in 1788 under Amba Rao.

On the death of Bhagel Singh, the leadership of the Misal fell to Jodh Singh, son of Gurbakhsh Singh, the founder of Kalsia family, who was a comrade and great friend of Bhagel Singh. Jodh Singh was a clever man and considerably extended his possessions. He did not spare even the possessions of the

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Phulkian Chiefs who, tired of his frequent incursions into their country, bought him off by making a matrimonial alliance with him, the Raja of Patiala giving his daughter's hand to his son Hari Singh. Soon after, however, Jodh Singh became a vassal of Ranjit Singh and was present with his contingent at the siege of Naraingarh in 1807 and the siege of Multan in 1818 when he died. At his death his territory passed into the hands of the Chief of Kalsia who is still among the ruling Chiefs of the Punjab.

X. THE SHAHID AND NIHANG MISAL

This Misal does not deserve more than a passing notice. It had considerable possessions on the east bank of the Sutlej, and, under Karm Singh and Gurbakhsh Singh, commanded an army of 2,000 horsemen, but its chief importance lay in the fact that it was composed of those fanatical priests who claimed descent from Sikh martyrs and considered it their duty to preserve the prestine purity of Sikhism as established by Guru Govind Singh. The Nihangs or Akalis as they are otherwise called are a dying race now, but their name will always live in history owing to the exploits of Phula Singh, one of the great generals of Ranjit Singh.

XI.—THE PHULKIA MISAL

The Phulkia Misal as represented by the Patiala Branch, is the most important of all in as much as the head of this Misal, Raja Alla

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org



H. H. The Maharaja of Patiala,
Present Head of the Phulkia Misal.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org



Master Tara Singh,

Leader of the Akali Party of the Sikhs.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Singh was the first among the Sikhs to have conceived the idea of setting up a Raj in the void created by the collapse of the Moghal Empire and the first Sikh Chief to be acknowledged as an independent ruler by Muhammadans as well as the Sikhs themselves.

The founder of this Misal was Phul, a scion of the Sidhu Brar Branch of the Bhatti Tribe. He is supposed to have been the thirtieth in descent from Jesal, the founder of Jesalmir. There is little doubt that Phul belonged to a distinguished family. Phul seems to have early displayed a liking for the Sikh tenets and won the favour of Guru Har Rai who is said to have prophesied a great future for Phul and his descendants. The prophesy was amply fulfilled, for the sons of Phul became the ancestors of the ruling families of Patiala, Jind and Nabha called after him the Phulkia States and the famous chiefs of Bhador, Malod and Jiandan etc.

Phul passed his time in fighting the Bhattis of Jesalmir and the Moghul Malguzar at Jagraon, and was ultimately taken prisoner by the Governor of Sarhind. He is supposed to have died of apoplexy in 1682 or 1689 [1]

1. According to a popular tradition, he was a Yogi and when called upon to pay the tribute he withdrew his breath into his brain and feigned death. None of his attendants being aware of his powers as a Yogi, he was taken for dead and cremated before the opening of his Samadhi.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Phul was succeeded by his son Ram Chand who was a fine soldier and a capable leader. He was constantly busy in fighting the Bhattis and the Chief of Kot, every one of whom he humbled to the dust, until he was assassinated by the sons of one Chain Singh, one of his own lieutenants whom he had put to death. This was in 1714 A.D.

Ram Chand was succeeded by his third son, the famous Alla Singh, born in 1690 A.D. under whom the Sikhs for the first time attained the position of an independent nation. After a desultory warfare with his Mussalman neighbours and rivals, Alla Singh came in collision with Nawab Asad Ali, the Imperial Governor of Jullundur Doab whom he defeated after a desperate battle and great slaughter, the Nawab himself being among the slain. This victory gained over the combined armies of Bhatti Rajputs and Imperial troops immensely increased the prestige of Alla Singh and crowds of Sikhs from both sides of the Sutlej rallied round his standard. His fame reached Delhi, and the Emperor Muhammad Shah apprehending a potential enemy in Alla Singh decided to win him over and sent a firman and his envoys to him asking for his aid in the management of Sarhind and promising him the title of Raja if he satisfied the Delhi Court by his conduct.

The next eighteen years of his life were spent in fighting his hereditory enemies, the Bhattis and the Imperial Foujdar at Sarhind.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

By the latter he was taken prisoner but was released by the diplomacy and sacrifice of a devoted follower. In 1749 he built the fort of Bhawanigarh, and in 1752 he took the district of Sanawar comprising eighty four villages. One of these villages was Patiala which is now the capital of the State of the same name. Here he built a mud fort called Garhi Sodhian, the remains of which were still to be seen in the last quarter of the 19th century. In 1757 he defeated the Bhattis and the Moghul Governor of Hissar after a deadly struggle of eight days.

The successes of the Sikhs, especially those of Alla Singh, attracted the attention of Ahmad Shah Durrani to the Punjab. He hastened to the rescue of the Foujdar of Sarhind in 1762 and defeated the Sikhs in a running fight extending from Kup to Barnala in which the Sikhs lost thousands in killed and wounded.[1] Alla Singh was taken prisoner but the Durrani was so struck by his manly bearing that he released him on payment of a fine of four lacs by Rani Fatto, wife of Alla Singh. His independence was acknowledged and robes of honour were conferred on him by the King who embraced him in a most friendly manner.

Alla Singh died in 1765 and was succeeded by his grand-son Amar Singh. Mean-

---

1. This was the famous Ghullughara mentioned earlier.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

while the power of the Sikhs was increasing very fast in the Punjab, so that when the Durrani King who was rapidly declining in years came to India again in 1767 he did not think it advisable to interfere with Amar Singh's military operations. On the other hand, he thought it politic to make the best of the bad job and making it a virtue of necessity confirmed him, so to say, in his sovereignty with the title of Raja-i-Rajgan and presented him with a flag and a drum, the insignia of Royalty. Amar Singh's right to strike coin in his own name was also acknowledged.

Amar Singh began his military career by invading Malerkotla, wresting Punjab and some other places from its Chief. Soon after he seized the forts of Sefabad and Sirsa, took Mani Majra and Kot Kapura, overran Faridkot and annexed Bhatinda deposing its Chief Sukhchain whom he granted 12 villages in jagir. Four years a ter this Amar Singh died of dropsy in March 1782

He was succeeded by his son Sahib Singh, a boy of six years. Momentous events took place in the reign of this prince. The Mahrattas tried to exact tribute from him and it is recorded that Bibi Rajindra Kaur and Bibi Sahib Kaur achieved great distinction in the struggle with them. George Thomas, the famous Irish adventurer, made many inroads into his territory but with the help of the Mahratta Generals was made to surrender in

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

1801. Meanwhile Ranjit Singh turned his attention to the Trans-Sutlej States and Mohkam Chand, his greatest General, was annexing the Trans-Sultej territory bit by bit. Sahib Singh in his turn attracted the attention of the Maharaja but a treaty was signed by both and the two Chiefs swore perpetual friendship, exchanging their turbans in token of brotherhood. The British Government was, however, at this time feeling a great anxiety owing to the rumours about a Napoleonic invasion of India and was taking every possible precaution against the threatened calamity. Negotiations were going on between that Government and Persia and Afghanistan. Lord Minto wanted to make an alliance with Ranjit Singh as well but at the same time did not like the idea of allowing Ranjit Singh to become too strong. It was for this reason that Metcalfe was commissioned to tell the Maharaja to withdraw his troops from the southern side of the Sutlej and try to have a treaty of friendship signed by him. The British Government would, if successful everywhere, have a fourfold cordon between India and Napoleon, *viz.*, Persia, Afghanistan, Ranjit Singh and the South Sutlej Sikh States. At any rate the ousting of Ranjit Singh from the South side of Sutlej would leave the resouces of the powerful Sikh States on the South of the Sutlej under the control and at the disposal of the British Government, besides crippling proportionately the power of Ranjit Singh who was rapidly rising into

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

powerful rivalry with the British Government in North India. The diplomacy of Metcalfe, assisted by Ochterloney's military expedition, at last succeeded and the well-known Minto-Metcalfe treaty with Ranjit Singh was signed on 30th of May 1809. By this treaty the Patiala and its kindred States of Nabha and Jind along with other States beyond the Sutlej passed under the protection of the British Government and have, since then, been, the faithful allies of that Government.

The relations between the Patiala State and the late Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha became very strained Their disputes had to be referred to arbitration and were ultimately decided in favour of Patiala The relations between Nabha and the Paramount Power also became very strained with the result that Maharaja Ripudaman Singh was deported to Kodai Canal in Madras and died there in exile.

His Highness Maharaja Yadavendra Singh is the present head of this Misal. He is an upstanding youngman and an all-round fine specimen of humanity, cultured and very progressive in his views. The State has made great progress during his regime. He is for all practical purposes the leader of the Sikhs of the Punjab and the Punjab States.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

XII THE SUKARCHAKIA MISAL

This Misal derives its name from the village Sukarchak situated in the Amritsar District. This is the Misal to which the ancestors of Maharaja Ranjit Singh belonged. The family of Sukarchakia Sirdars was of the Jat Sansi tribe closely related to the Sandhanwalia Chief. I cannot say if there is any truth in what Sir Lepel Griffin, K.C.S.I., the biographer of Ranjit Singh, says regarding the connection of this Misal with the tribe of Sansis. The mere fact that their ancestral home, Raja Sansi, a village 5 miles from the city of Amritsar, bears this name would not, in my opinion, support Griffin's theory that this family bore "a close connection with the thievish and degraded tribe of Sansis", who are even now treated as a criminal tribe. I am inclined to think that the word "Sansi" is derived from the Sanskrit word "Sahasi" meaning energetic and adventurous, a name which would suit the tribe much more considering that, as stated by Griffin himself, the Sandhanwalias claim a Rajput descent.

The founder of the Misal, as was usual with many other leaders, was a bold and successful robber, Budha Singh. He is said to have been wounded some 40 times during his raids. He died in 1718 A.D. leaving two brave and enterprising sons, Chanda Singh and Nodh Singh. In 1730, these young men re-built the village of Sukarchak and collecting round

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

them a band of hard-riding Sikhs seized several villages in its neighbourhood and round about Gujranwala. Chanda Singh became the ancestor of Sandhanwalia Chiefs while Nodh Singh was the direct ancestor of Ranjit Singh. He was killed at Majitha fighting the Afghans leaving one son named Charrat Singh, then five years old, who, in course of time, became a powerful Sirdar and Commander of the Misal. It was he who with the help of the Ahluwalias and Bhangi Sirdars drove out Ubed Khan, the Afghan Governor, from his headquarters at Gujranwala and captured all his guns and baggage. He added a large amount of territory to the possessions of the Misal. He led an expedition against Raja Ranjit Deo of Jammu as the champion of the Raja's son Brij Lal Deo who had fallen out with his father. While there he was killed by the bursting of his own gun. This was in 1773. His *Samadh* is just adjacent to the M.B. School at Gujranwala from which the writer passed his middle school examination in 1894. It has now been converted into a Girls' School.

Mahan Singh, the eldest son of Charrat Singh, succeeded to the command of the Confederacy. While still a boy of tender years, he was married to Raj Kour, a daughter of Raja Gajpat Singh of Jind. Six years later i.e., in 1780 Maharaja Ranjit Singh was born of this Princess. Mahan Singh is not painted in very bright colours by the biographer of

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Ranjit Singh as he has been accused of treachery against Raja Brij Lal Deo of Jammu although he had, as a token of friendship, exchanged turbans with him. In order to prevent the Bhangi and Kanhia Sirdars from exploiting the wealth of Jammu, he forestalled them and attacked the town himself and forgetting his sworn friendship to the Raja he sacked and burnt the town and palace and retired with great spoil before any other Sirdar could reach the spot. This enraged the Kanhia leader, Jai Singh, and he attacked Mahan Singh and seized a large slice of his territory. Mahan Singh asked for forgiveness but Jai Singh was so enraged that he refused to grant him pardon unless the spoils of Jammu were shared with him. Mahan Singh refused to do so and making an alliance with Jassa Singh Ramgarhia, an old enemy of Jai Singh, and Raja Sansar Chand, Katoch gave battle to Jai Singh and defeated him in a sanguinary battle. This defeat proved the ruin of the Kanhia Misal and Jai Singh practically won peace not only by giving up large slices of his territory but also gave his infant granddaughter, Mehtab Kour, in marriage to Ranjit Singh. This alliance greatly added to the power of Mahan Singh and step by step, he annexed considerable territory to his Misal. In 1790 Mahan Singh besieged Manchar, the fortress of Ch Ghulam Muhammad Chattah (presumably an ancestor of the Chattahs of Ahmadnagar, a well-known village near Wazirabad). While fighting was going

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

on, Hashmat Khan, an uncle of Ghulam Muhammad, climbed on the elephant on which Ranjit Singh, then a boy of 10, was sitting. He was in the act of killing the child when he was struck down by one of Ranjit Singh's attendents. Well has Griffin remarked that if Hashmat Khan had succeeded "the history of India and England would have been materially changed." The conquest of Manchar by Mahan Singh reminds me of a story which I was told by Bhai Mehr Singh who was a veteran of Chillianwala and was a neighbour of ours in my native village (Baddoki Gosaian, District Gujranwala) from whom as a child I used to hear many an anecdote about the Sikhs and Sikh Wars. He told me how Mahan Singh took Manchar, a place not far from our village, Skirmishes were constantly going on between Mahan Singh and the Chattahs. To put an end to this warfare the parties swore on their sacred books to live as peaceful neighbours. The temptation, however, to seize the rich lands of the Muslims was too great for the Sikh Chief and while the Chattahs were lulled to a sense of security by the plighted troth of Mahan Singh, he pounced upon them and annexed all their territory. This gave currency to a song in the neighbouring villages one line of which recited by Bhai Mehr Singh I still remember:

Manh Singh Manchar marya hath pothi pharke.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Mahan Singh also fell out with his own sister's husband, Sahib Singh Bhangi. He had been casting longing eyes on Gujrat, the principal town in the possession of Sahib Singh. This ultimately led to his attack on him. A bloody battle was fought at Sodran, a town about 4 miles from Wazirabad. While, however, the battle was going on, Mahan Singh fell ill and his Mahawat drew back his elephant from the battle-field. This created panic among his troops who fled from the battle-field as soon as he retired. Mahan Singh returned to Gujranwala but he did not recover from his illness and died in 1792, at the early age of about thirty years. Maharaja Ranjit Singh then a boy of twelve became the head of the Misal. A short account of this great man, who later on ruled over the Punjab for forty years, is given in Chapter XIX of this book.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER XVIII

The Punjab Administration Under the Misals

The Sikh States before the times of Ranjit Singh were small military monarchies. It is, therefore, necessary to start with a brief account of the Sikh armies which were the mainstay of these little kingdoms.

Before the time of Ranjit Singh the army of the Khalsa consisted entirely of *sawars* or horsemen. The horses were generally reared in Lakhee Jungle in the vicinity of Bhatinda and every true member of the Khalsa was supposed to be a horseman. The saddle, in fact, was the home of the Khalsa for several generations. The strength of the Sikh army in 1783 was estimated at 300,000, but might be taken at 200,000.[1] But its real strength was probably not more than 73,000 horsemen and 25,000 foot, as estimated by Browne,[2] or more correctly 60,000 horse and 5,000 foot, as given by George Thomas, the English adventurer who had himself come in collision with the Sikhs.

---

1. Forster. Journey I. 333.

2. India Tracts. Colonel Francklin in his Life of George Thomas puts the number of effective troops at 64,000.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

The infantry of which the last mentioned estimate seems to be quite correct was wholly used to garrison forts.[1]

The Sikhs probably possessed no cannon before they captured the twelve pieces abandoned at Gujranwala by the defeated army of Lahore under Khawja Obed in 1762. But they do not seem to have used even these in any battle. Upto 1800 A. D. the Sikhs did not possess more than forty pieces of field guns.[2] "When equipped for the field they generally carried sword, spear and musket."[3] The Sikhs speedily became famous for the effective use of the matchlock when mounted and this skill is said to have descended to them from their ancestors, in whose hands the bow was a deadly weapon.[4]

In the early days the Sikhs had no decent uniforms. The common trooper was clad in Pagri or turban, a Kurta or shirt and a pair of knicker-bockers, with tight-fitting slippers. The chiefs probably wore chain armour together with a steel helmet, breast-plates, back-plates, wristguards and greaves.

---

1. Cunningham.

2. Francklin (Life of George Thomas) who quotes George Thomas himself.

3. Syed Muhammad Latif.

4. Cunningham.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

The Sikhs never knew what drill was before they were disciplined by Ranjit Singh with the help of deserters from British Indian army and some French, Italian and American officers, some of whom had been in Napoleonic wars. The place of discipline was supplied by enthusiasm and courage. Every one knew that he had to conquer or to die. Still, however, every expedition was headed by one chief, elected to the command by the other chiefs who took instructions from him and commanded their own respective contingents, much of course being left to the discretion of the subordinate officers themselves.

The national flag of the Sikhs was of saffron colour, the colour of the ancient Hindu flag, but I have not been able to discover if it had any design or heraldic sign.

The war cry of the Sikhs was *Sat Sri Akal*[1] and *Wah Guru ji ka Khalsa, Sri Wah Guru ji ki Fateh.*"[2]

The mode of fighting followed by the Sikhs is thus described by Major Francklin.[3]

"The Sikhs are armed with a spear, matchlock and scimitar, their method of fighting as described by Mr. Thomas is singular.

---

1. True is the blessed Lord.
2. Lord's is the *Khalsa*, Lord's be the victory.
3. Memoirs of George Thomas, p. 71.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

After performing the requisite duties of their religion by ablution and prayer, they comb their hair and beard with peculiar care. Then mounting their horses ride forth towards the enemy with whom they engage in a continued skirmish advancing and retreating, until man and horse become equally fatigued. They then draw off to some distance from the enemy, and meeting with cultivated ground, they permit their horses to graze of their own accord while they parch a little grain for themselves and after satisfying nature by this frugal repast, if the enemy be near, they renew the skirmishing; should he have retreated, they provide forage for their cattle and endeavour to procure a meal for themselves. Seldom indulging in the comforts of a tent whilst in the enemy's country, the repast of a Sikh cannot be supposed to be either sumptuous or elegant. Seated on the ground with a mat spread before them, a Brahmin, appointed for the purpose, serves out a portion of food to each individual, the cakes of flour which they eat during the meal serving them in the room of dishes and plates. Accustomed from their earliest infancy to a life of hardship and difficulty, the Sikhs despise the comforts of a tent. In lieu of this each horseman is furnished with two blankets, one for himself and the other for his horse. These blankets which are placed beneath the saddle with a grain bag and heel ropes comprise in time of war the whole baggage of a Sikh. Their

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

cooking utensils are carried on *tattoos* (or ponies)."

MODE OF GOVERNMENT.

It has been pointed out that Govind Singh turned Sikhism into a theocracy. The whole nation had a living faith that it was under the special protection of God. Next to God was the Guru who was supposed to be always aiding and guarding his followers. The sovereignty of the nation was vested in the general body of the nation itself. The twelve misals were controlled by powerful chiefs but these chiefs exercised their sway with the goodwill of their followers, who always went through the ceremony of electing their chiefs. That these elections were not always nominal is shown by the fact that many times the heirs apparent were set aside and a really capable ruler was elected from among the descendants or relations of the deceased chief and sometimes even from among the troops themselves.[1]

The affairs affecting the whole nation were settled by a council of all the chiefs, held at Amritsar, under the name of Gurmata, during the Dussehra holidays, a military festival still observed in Hindu States with great eclat, and celebrated by holding special durbars and reviews of the State troops. The Gurmata was summoned by Akalis or warrior-priests →

1. Mufti Ali-ud-Din. *Ibrat Nama.*

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

who owned no allegiance to anybody, held charge of the temple and devoted themselves to the service of the nation by punishing dissenters and traitors and keeping up, by precept and by example, the religious fervour and fighting zeal of the Khalsa. The proceedings of the council are thus described by Malcolm:—

Gurmata

"When the chiefs meet upon this solemn occasion it is concluded that all private animosities cease, and that every man sacrifices his personal feelings at the shrine of the general good, and actuated by principles of pure patriotism thinks of nothing but the interests of religion and the commonwealth to which he belongs. (When the chiefs and principal leaders are seated, the *Adigranth* and *Daswen Padshah ka Granth* are placed before them.) They all bend their heads before these scriptures and exclaim *Wah Guru ji ka Khal·a*, etc. *Karah Prasad*[1] next receives the salutation of the assembly who then rise and the Akalis pray aloud." The members resume their seats after the prayer and *Karah Prasad* is then distributed and eaten together "in token of their general and complete union in one cause." The Akalis then exclaim, "Sirdars (chiefs) this is a *Gurmata*," on which prayers

---

1. A sort of pudding made of equal parts of wheaten flour, sugar and clarified butter. It still forms an essential part of all important ceremonies observed by the Sikhs.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

are again said aloud. The chiefs then draw close and say to each other. "The sacred Granth is betwixt us, let us swear by our scripture to forget all internal disputes and to be united."

"This moment of religious fervour and ardent patriotism is taken to reconcile all animosities. They then proceed to consider the danger with which they are threatened, and settle the best plans for averting it and to choose the generals who are to lead their armies against the common enemy. The first *Gurmata* was held by Guru Govind, and the latest (up to 1805) was called in 1805 when the British army pursued Holkar into the Punjab."[1]

In the internal affairs of his territory each chief was independent. All booty was equally divided by the chiefs who further divided it among their followers. These followers were not serfs, but exactly like feudal retainers, holding lands on condition of military service, with this exception that every one was free to leave his master and go to another, this circumstance giving another proof of the oneness of the whole Sikh nation in which every member believed.

Revenue The revenues of the chiefs were of two kinds, those received from the country occupied by them and the "Rakhi" or protection

1. Malcolm. *Sketch of the Sikhs* (pp. 77, 78).

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

money levied from the country subdued but not occupied by the Sikhs. The Rakhi money ranged between one-fifth and one-half of the rental or Government share of the produce.[1] As regards the other kind of revenues, "It is stated to be a general rule," says Malcolm, "that the chiefs to whom the territories belong should receive one-half of the produce and the farmer the other: but the chief never levies the whole of his share: and in no country, perhaps, is the rayat or cultivator treated with more indulgence."[2] The taxes on trade were at first heavy but the Sikh chiefs soon "discovered the injury which their interests have suffered from this cause, and have endeavoured and not without success, to restore confidence to the merchant, and great part of the shawl trade now flows through the cities of Lahore, Amritsar and Patiala, to Hindustan." Every major and minor chief exercised by prescription the privilege of taxing trade, yet the duties though levied at every ten to twenty miles were light.

Beema or insurance could be had at a cheap rate from the Nauriah merchants to all parts of India.

---

1. Cunningham.

2. *Sketch*, p. 80. "Grain pays in kind being assessed by appraisement, sugarcane, cotton, poppy, etc, are assessed at fixed rates and pay in cash. (*Murray*).

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

Cases of property and other civil suits were decided by the Panchayat, or Court of Five, consisting of the leading men of the village. "As they are always chosen from men of the best reputation in the place where they meet, this Court has a high character for justice."[1] Any case could also be taken to the chief. Criminal justice was administered by the chief.

"Crimes and trespasses, as in the middle ages, are atoned for by money: the fines are unlimited by any rule, and generally levied arbitrarily according to the means of the offender whose property is attached and his family placed under restraint to enforce payment.

He who gains his point pays his *shukrana* or present of gratitude and he who has lost pays his *jareemana* or penalty. All officers under the Chief and Employed by him in districts and departments follow his example, but if guilty of excesses are ultimately thrown into a *bora* (bhora) or dungeon and required to refund, and when they have satisfied the cupidity of their superior they are generally permitted to resume their functions, honoured with the shawl as a mark of favour,

1. Malcolm; *Sketch*, p. 81.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Capital punishment is very seldom inflicted. The most incorrigible culprits are punished with the loss of either one or both hands and deprivation of nose or ears.[1] but mutilation is rare for whoever has the means to pay or can procure a respectable security to pay for him within a given time may expiate the most heinous transgression.

Highway robbery. On the commission of a *dakka* or highway robbery, the chief within whose jurisdiction the act has been perpetrated is called upon to make restitution and, should he decline, the chief whose subject has suffered resorts to the *lex talionis* and drives off several hundred head of cattle or retaliates in some other way.

Petty theft.—"When a petty theft is substantiated either through the medium of a *muhurkhaee* or the production of a *moodoo* or *namuna* (the confession of one of the thieves or a part of the stolen property), the sufferer has generally, as a preliminary, to pay the *chuharam* or a fourth as a perquisite to the chief or his *thanadar* ere he can recover the amount of his losses. Independent of this the *muhurkhaee* or approver generally stipulates for a full pardon and that no demand

---

1. Statutes were passed in the reign of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Elizabeth and James I, sanctioning and directing the loss of the right and left hand and of an ear, for offences which would by a Sikh scarcely be deemed deserving the infliction of a mulet.—*Murray.*

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

shall he made on the confessing delinquent for his *kundee*, *viz.*, any or such portion of the property as may have accrued to him as his dividend of the spoil. This share of the spoil becomes chargeable to the other thieves and on settling accounts it is distributed equally amongst them."

Stolen Cattle.—In all cases of stolen cattle it is an established rule when the *suragh khoj* or trace of the footsteps is carried to the gate or into the fields of any village, the zamindars of that village must either show the track beyond their own boundary and allow the village to be searched or pay the value of the cattle.[1]

Succession to landed property.—The rules of succession to landed property in the Sikh States are arbitrary and are variously modified in accordance with the usages, the interests and prejudices of different families, nor is it practicable to reduce the anomalous system to a fixed and leading principle. A distinction obtains in the canons of inheritance between the Majha and Malwa Sikhs.

The practice of succession to property both real and personal amongst the Majha Sikhs is by *Bhaeeband* and *Choondaband*, the

---

1. Hume in treating of the Anglo-Saxons says: "If any man could track his stolen cattle into another's ground the latter was obliged to show the tracks out of it or pay their value."

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

first being an equal distribution of all lands, forts, tenements and movables among sons, with, in some instances, an extra or double share to the eldest termed *Kharch Sardari* assimilating to the double share in the law of Moses.

Choondaband is an equal division among mothers for their respective male issue.

Where no male issue :—When a Majha Sikh dies, leaving no male offspring, his brothers, or his nephews of the full blood assume the right of succession to which the widow or widows become competitors. According to Shastras the title of the widows is held prior but the Sikh to avoid it resorts to *Chadarandazi*.

Chadarandazi.—The eldest surviving brother of the deceased places a white robe over and the *nath* or ring in the nose of the widow, which ceremony constitutes her his wife.

Where no nephew, etc.—On failure of brothers and nephews the general practice is equal division of lands and personal effects amongst the surviving widows of Manjha Sikhs.

Adoption by widows :—Adoption by the widows is not allowed and the female line is entirely excluded from the succession to prevent the estates merging in the possessions of another family.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Malwa Singhs.—Among the Malwa Singhs the rights of primogeniture in the males are respected and *jagirs* or grants of land are assigned for the maintenance of younger sons. The Malwa Singhs also with the exception of *Bhais* sanction and admit the usage of *karewa*, or widow marriage, thereby opposing a bar to disputed succession between the brothers, nephews and the widows of a deceased chief. The *Bhais* of Kythul and other places, though against *karewa*, set aside the claims of widows and give them small *jagirs* for maintenance.

Muhammadans are allowed to follow their own laws of succession, etc.

Boundary disputes are decided by a convention of neighbouring Zemindars, who are bound by a solemn oath to act impartially.[1]

The litigant made choice of an equal number of Munsiffs or arbitrators, in some cases, one each, in others, two to three each. Five different modes of accommodation were in general adoption amongst these *punchayats*.

(1) An equal division of the land in dispute.

---

1. The oath administered to the person who erects the boundary pillars, if a Hindu, is the Ganges water or the *Chour* or swearing by his son. If a Mussalman, the Koran or placing his hands on his son's head, the *Chour* and swearing by his own child are the most binding.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

(2) The *punchayat* selected the oldest and most respectable member of their Committee to define the limit, the others consenting to abide by his award.

(3) A moiety of the line of demarcation was drawn by the arbiters of one party and the remaining portion by the others.

(4) The *punchayat* referred the final adjustment to an old inhabitant of a neighbouring village upon whose local knowledge and experience they placed more reliance than on their own limited information.

(5) It sometimes occurred to the *punchayat* to leave the division in the hands of one of the disputants whose probity and reputation were established in the vicinity.

Boundary disputes and bloodshed.—Bloodshed between zemindars in a boundary dispute is sometimes atoned for by giving a *nata* or daughter in marriage to a relative of the deceased or commuted to the payment of Rs. 150 to Rs. 200 or 125 bighas of land. In general, revenge is sought, the blood-money being considered an inadequate recompense.

Islands in a river.—Claims to islands in a river flowing between two manors and to alluvions are determined by what is called the *kuchmuch* or *kishtee bunna* which rule assigns the land to the proprietor of the bank or *imani* upon which alluvion is thrown and from

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

which the water has receded. Island in the centre of a river where water is deep enough for boats to ply, becomes the joint property of the chiefs on both banks. In case of diluvion the chief whose land was carried away did not lose his right.

Nuptial Contracts etc. Breach of promise cases were referred by the chief to *punchayats*. The verdict used to be one of the following :—

(1) Plaintiff was awarded another female from the girl's family.

(2) If no other girl, the defendant must find a substitute.

(3) Damages actually incurred or some more money.

Laws of Extradition.—If a woman absconded into other territory there was no help except reprisals, or a request by a *panchayat* to restore the woman. Debtors and revenue defaulters were never given back except at the request of the *panchayat* which gave assurances of the man's safety.

Administration of charity. There was no poor law. Every village had a system called *malba* for incidental expenses called *aya giya* or the expenditure incurred in entertaining guests, including State officials. There were *sada brats* and Thakurdwaras where charity was dispensed to the needy in the form of food and clothes.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

LAND TENURE

There were four kinds of tenure by which land was held under the administration of the Misals, *viz.*, (1) Pattidari, (2) Misaldari, (3) Tabadari, and (4) Jagirdari. Pattidari was the system under which the associates in the Misal, of lower rank than a Sardar, down even to the single horseman held a share in the land belonging to the Misal. "All these (pattidars) regulated entirely the management of their *pattit* (share), fining, confining or even further ill-treating according to their pleasure, any zemindar or working ryot of their allotment. Reciprocal aid for mutual protection and defence was the relation on which a pattidar stood in other respects to the Sardar, and the only condition of his tenure.[1]

Misaldari was the tenure under which "Bodies of inferior strength or petty chiefs with their followers attached themselves sometimes to a Misal without subscribing to any conditions of association or dependence. The allotments of land assigned to such would be considered as the free reward of their co-operation and would be held in no sort of dependence. If dissatisfied with his chief a Misaldar might transfer himself with his possessions to another under whose protection and countenance he might prefer to continue."

---

1. Prinsep, p. 28.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

"A Tabadar was on the other hand a retainer, as the word is understood in Europe, one completely subservient. The lands which were his reward were liable to forfeiture for any act of disobedience or rebellion, and at the caprice of the Sardar might be resumed upon any occasion of displeasure."

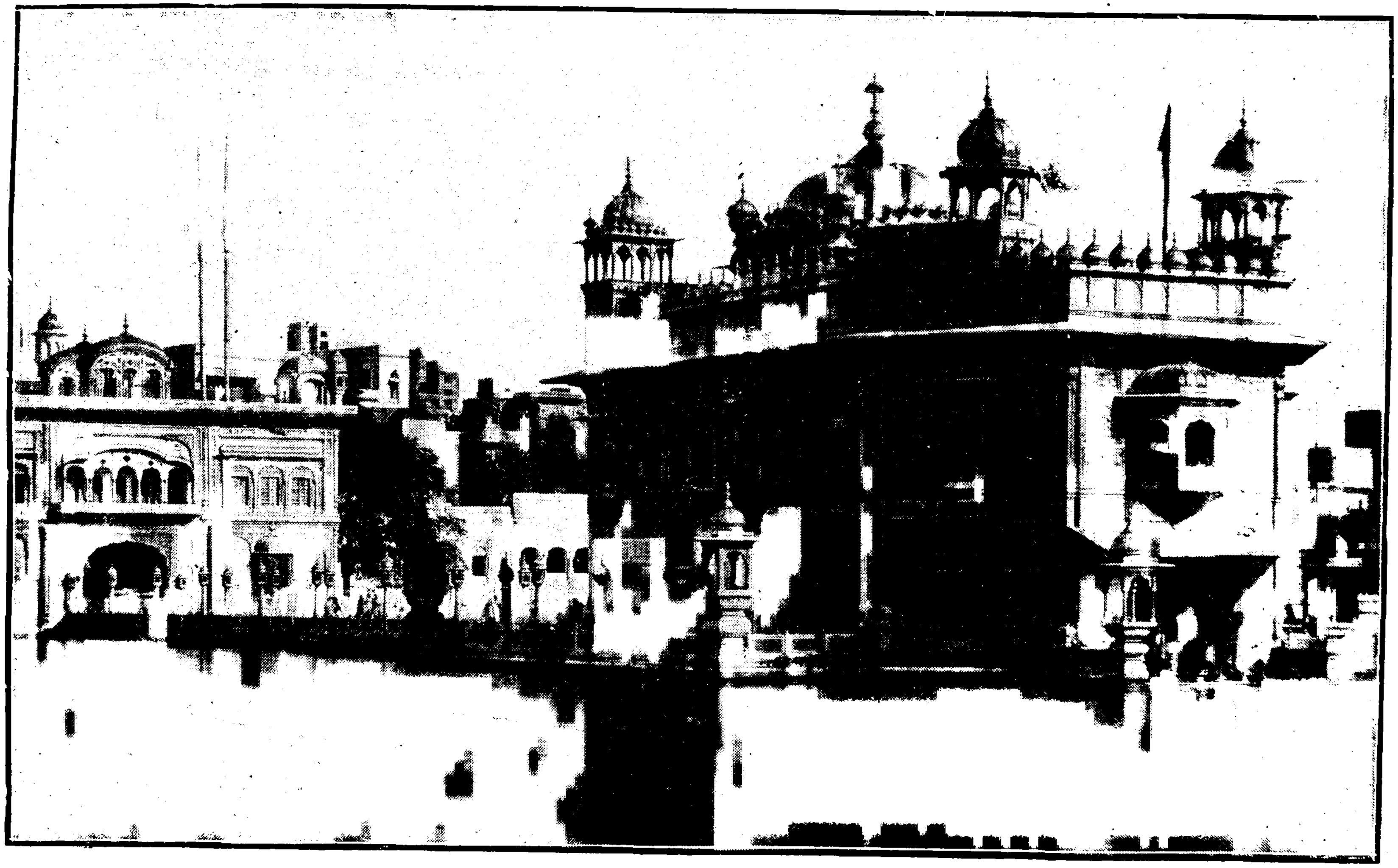
"The fourth class of tenures or Jagirs were given to needy relations, dependants, and entertained soldiers who deserved well and the holders were liable to be called upon for their personal service at all times, with their quotas or contingents equipped and mounted at their own charge according to the extent of the grant. These were even further under the power of the Sardar than the Tabadari grants. Both were hereditary only according to his pleasure, the lands of them formed part of the allotment set apart for the Sardari, and the Misal, or Association had, of course, nothing to say in such assignment."[1]

---

1. Prinsep, p. 29.

Shavinder
G.S. Gangsingh Sidhu.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org



GOLDEN TEMPLE AT AMRITSAR.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org



Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Lion of the Punjab,
Under whom the Sikhs rose to a great Military Power.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER XIX

Maharaja Ranjit Singh

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was the beau ideal of Sikh chivalry In him the Sikh power was at its zenith. Not only the Sikhs but the whole Hindu nation felt that in him the Sun of Hindu glory had once more risen in the political horizon of India. They showered upon him their heartiest blessings. They looked upon him as their liberator and their protector, one who after, centuries of barbarous attacks from the North, hurled back the invaders and raiders to their mountain lairs. They bestowed their unstinted love and affection on him and revered him as a God-sent guardian of their hearths and homes and upholder of their national honour. I was born about forty years after his demise but I have relatives who had enjoyed the bliss of having lived during his reign. One or another of them spoke almost every day about him. Sarkar used to do this and Sarkar used to do that, they said all this with such devotion and reverence as made me in my childhood feel, and almost sigh, how unfortunate I was that I had missed seeing the great Sarkar. An old Aunt of mine seemed convinced that the Maharaja was an '*Avatari Ji*' and was gifted with miraculous powers. Her belief was based on the fact, as she related,

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

that when Sarkar went to Peshawar side to fight the Pathans, he put his horse into the waters of the Indus and waited there until his whole army crossed over and not a single soldier or camp-follower was lost, while those who attempted to cross it after the Maharaja had gone, were carried away by the current.

"Although half a century has passed since his death", says Sir Lepel Griffin in his book on Ranjit Singh, "his name is still a household word in the Province, his portrait is still preserved in castle and in cottage. It is a favourite subject with the ivory painters of Amritsar and Delhi." I remember with what reverence and devotion when I was a child, we used to gaze at his picture, mounted on a fine black charger followed by a stalwart footman carrying the royal umbrella over the Maharaja's head. Even after half a century of British rule the hearts of the Hindus turned back to Ranjit Singh as their national hero.

Though not very tall and somewhat disfigured by smallpox which had deprived him of one eye, he was in Griffin's words, "Beau ideal of a soldier, strong, spare, active, courageous and enduring. An excellent horseman, he would remain the whole day in the saddle without showing any sign of fatigue." When he heard of General Hari Singh Nalwa's death in action in Peshawar, he hastened to Peshawar and rode in one day from Lahore to Jhelum a distance of 102 miles. He was probably the

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

best rider and best swordsman of his time in India. When he met the Governor-General in the Field of Cloth of Gold at Rupar in 1831, he personally competed with Skinner's horse in tent-pegging and feats of swordsmanship. While riding at full gallop he cut into two a lemon held on his palm by a trooper without injuring the trooper, a feat which no one else was able to perform. Among his other gifts his courage and soldierly accomplishments made a special appeal to his people who prized physical fitness and courage above other gifts. Ranjit Singh's popularity with his people as well as with his army and civil and military officers was immense and unprecedented. His word was law, sacred law, with them and the respect in which he was held by one and all amounted to worship. He lived a simple life, his dress was scrupulously simple. He hated all display of jewellery. "He was" says Griffin, "a born ruler with the natural genius of command." Men obeyed him as if they were under a spell of hypnotism and had no power to disobey. "It was strange indeed to observe" says his English biographer, "how complete was his ascendency over his brilliant Court of fierce and turbulent chiefs even when he had become feeble, blind and paralysed." "Which eye of your King is blind"? This was a question put to his Foreign Minister (Fakir Aziz-ud-Din) by a British Officer of Simla. Fakir Sahib's answer was characteristic of the man and of the general attitude of the Maharaja's officers to him. "The splendour of his face is such",

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

said he, "that I have never been able to look close enough to discover". One is reminded of the answer that Lachhman gave to his brother Rama when asked to identify Sita's jewellery. "I can identify the jewels she wore on her feet but no other" as he had never lifted his eyes to look at her face.

One of the Maharaja's great gifts was the acumen with which he chose his officers. He always selected the right man for the right place and never hestitated to dismiss or transfer even the highest as soon as any weakness was betrayed by him. It is remarkable that none of his officers, Ministers or Generals of whatever caste or creed ever played false with him.

Though illiterate like Akbar, Maharaja Ranjit Singh was like him richly endowed with natural sagacity and was equally tolerant and ready to recognise merit in all religions and in every individual irrespective of caste, creed or colour. "The main idea of Sikhism," says Sir Lepel Griffin, "was the destruction of Islam and it was unlawful to salute Muhammadans, to associate with them or to make peace with them on any terms". The Maharaja however, recognised no such restrictions and the highest posts in his Government were as open to the Mussalmans as to the Sikhs and other Hindus. His most trusted Minister was Fakir Aziz-ud-Din who served him most faithfully throughout his life. There were

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

many other Muslims occupying high positions as Governors of provinces and forts and commanders of armies The Maharaja had fifty Tiwanas among his Body-guard presenting with their high fluttering *turrahs* a most fascinating picture among the Maharaja's troops. Among his Hindu officers, Brahmans and Khatris were as conspicuous both in the Civil and Military departments as any Jats. In fact so far as the choice of Ministers was concerned Ranjit Singh never appointed any Jat. All his Ministers were either Rajputs, Brahmans or non-Jat Mussalmans.

The most important of the Maharaja's Ministers and officials were Dhian Singh and his brothers, the Dogra Rajputs of Jammu, Fakir Aziz-ud-Din and his brothers, Imam-ud-Din and Nur-ud-Din, perhaps the most cultured Sufi Mohammadans of the time and Ilahi Bakhsh, Commander of Artillery. Jamadar Khushal Singh, Raja Teja Singh, Raja Sahib Dyal, Raja Rallia Ram, Diwan Ajodhia Prasad, Raja Dina Nath, all Brahmans, Diwan Mohkum Chand, Diwan Ram Dayal, Diwan Sawan Mal, all Khatris, Bhai Ram Singh, Bhai Govind Ram and Bhai Gurmukh Singh, all Arur-vanshis (Aroras) descendants of the famous Saint-Statesman Bhai Basti Ram. Of the Jats the most important were Sardar Attar Singh Sandhanwalia, Sardar Sham Singh, the noble hero of Subraon, Sardar Chatar Singh and his son Raja Sher Singh, the heroes of the second Sikh war and Commanders at the

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

famous battle of Chillianwala, S. Lehna Singh Majithia, famous for his skill in mechanics and other sciences. The Jats were almost entirely employed in the army. The Maharaja had several Europeans and some Americans also in his service. They were engaged for training his troops on European lines and they did their work so well that the Sikh troops became the most efficient fighting force in India and were rightly compared to Cromwell's Ironsides. Ventura and Avitable were the most prominent among them. The conditions imposed on foreigners before being taken into service were that they should abstain from eating beef. they should not shave their beards and if possible they should choose their wives from among Indian women.

Another important trait in the Maharja's character was the total absence of cruelty and vindictiveness. After a victory or the capture of a fortress he treated the vanquished with leniency and kindness however bitter their resistance might have been. There were at his court many chiefs whose estates he had annexed. He had given them suitable Employments or jagirs and had assured himself of their loyalty and devotion. The Sardars who had been the leaders of the several confederacies, which he overthrew, were all in this fashion reduced from equality and rivalship to honourable subjection ; and, in addition, there was large group of Muhammadan Khans and nobles whom Ranjit Singh wisely attached

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

to his fortunes, thereby materially strengthening his position in the western districts. The heads of the Mussulman tribes of Sials, Ghebas, Tiwanas and Kharrals, and the family of Nawab Muzaffar Khan of Multan were included in this group.

It is not within the scheme of this small book to go into the History of Ranjit Singh's conquests. He was really fighting and conquering all his life. He was born in 1780 at Gujranwala at a place in the Purani Mandi, near the office of the Gujranwala Municipal Committee, marked by a date-palm tree and a slab put up there probably by the Municipal Committee. He was married at the age of 4 to a grand-daughter of the famous Kanheya Chief, S. Jai Singh.

He was hardly 10 when he began to accompany his father on military expeditions and as stated before narrowly escaped being killed by a Chattah Chief. His father S. Mahan Singh died in 1792 when he was hardly 13 years old. Taking advantage of Ranjit's minority many encroachments were made on his patrimony by rival chiefs. One day his mother told him to look up as enemies were snatching away their lands. "Don't be impatient, mother", said he, "I shall not only take back my own lands but will also finish the intruders". He proved true to his word. He was hardly sixteen when he entered upon his career of conquest. He found a powerful

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

ally in his mother-in-law, Sada Kaur, the widow of S. Gurbakhsh Singh Kanheya. They first finished the Ramgarhias who had taken part in the attack on Batala in which Sada Kaur's husband had been killed. Lahore was then in possession of the Bhangi Sardars but the rulers being unpopular with the people of Lahore, Ranjit Singh was invited to come and take possession of the city. He then marched upon Lahore and took possession of it in July 1799. He was now recognised as a Raja. His first aim was to liquidate the misals and consolidate Sikh power with himself at its head. It did not take him much time to do so. All Misals fell before him one by one. When no Sikh rival was left in the field he turned his attention to Muslim principalities of which the most important were Multan, Jhang, Kasur, Mankera and some smaller ones held by Tiwanas, Kharrals Balochis, Awans, Janjohars, Chibs and others. None of them except the Afghans of Multan offered much resistance. In Multan Ranjit Singh found rather a hard nut to crack. The Nawab had several times bought him off but this did not suit Ranjit Singh's scheme of consolidation and in 1818 he sent a strong force under Misr Diwan Chand to reduce Multan. Nawab Muzaffar Khan offered stubborn resistance and fought to the last man, himself stepping into the breach with a drawn sword along with his five sons. The gallant young warriors were all killed and Multan with the whole surrounding country fell into the hands of the Maharaja. Mis

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Diwan Chand was given the title of "Conqueror of Multan". The following year Ranjit Singh took Kashmir and by 1820 he was the acknowledged ruler of the whole Punjab from the Sutlej to the Indus and Kashmir and the hill territories upto the confines of Tibet. In the next two or three years he conquered the province of Peshawar and most of the Trans-Indus territory which now forms the N.W.F. Province. For taking and keeping this province, he had to pay a heavy price including the life of his most dashing General Hari Singh Nalwa, but he continued to maintain his sway upto the last moment of his life and so firm had been his grip over his dominions that no one raised his head against the Khalsa even after his death.

These conquests did not satisfy Ranjit Singh's ambition. He wanted to be the head of all the Sikhs and Sikh States. He also wanted to annex Sind and thus have an outlet to the sea through that Province but a severe check under threat of war was placed on his ambition by the British Government. Quite early in his career as a conqueror he had crossed the Sutlej and would have easily swallowed Patiala, Jind, Nabha, Faridkot etc. Those Chiefs were at first under the protection of the Maharattas but when the Maharattas were defeated by the British they had to decide with whom to cast their lot. When young I heard from an uncle of mine how they came to the decision when they all assembled for the

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

purpose. They had to choose between Ranjit Singh and the British. They felt that their life was threatened either way. After much deliberation they came to the conclusion that Ranjit Singh was *Cholera* and the British were *Consumption*. They chose the latter as although it was an equally fatal disease it would give them a longer lease of life. British Government gave them protection and Ranjit Singh had to withdraw under a treaty with the British Government. He felt greatly annoyed but realising the strength of the British Government he kept quiet and faithfully adhered to the treaty as long as he lived.

Ranjit Singh ruled over the Punjab, the Frontier Province and Kashmir for about forty years. The Punjab enjoyed peace and freedom from religious bigotry, fanaticism and persecution for the first time after the demise of Akbar the Great. The administration was rough and ready as compared with the elaborate machinery of modern times but it by no means suffered in comparison with non-European states of the time Capital crime was perhaps much less than in those days in spite of about a quarter lakh of police and other protective forces.

The burden of taxation being based on *batai* system even if fairly high was not felt so acutely as the cash system introduced by the British Government.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

In other respects the Punjabees enjoyed full freedom from official interference as it was only for recovery of land revenue that Government came in touch with the people and even then with a limited section of the population. There was no Police in the modern sense and hardly any courts of the modern variety There was no Arms Act and people could protect themselves without the help of the Police and had all their disputes settled by the Panchayats. These Panchayats were not creations of the State but were *ad hoc* committees of the village elders who were known for their honesty and impartiality. They were not tied down to any technicalities of procedure and decided all cases on personal knowledge or where oral evidence was required on the statements of persons whose status and character were fully known to them. So much sanctity was attached to these Panchayats that no party dared tell lies before them.

On the whole the people were happy. They loved their Maharaja and their Maharaja loved them. When he died in 1839 there was universal mourning in the country and every one felt as if he had lost his own father and guardian. With his death it was said everywhere, the Punjab has become a widow.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER XX

After Him the Deluge

"After me the deluge." This is what a French sovereign said in anticipation of the bad times which, he thought, France would have after his death. This is what actually happened after Ranjit Singh and happened all too soon after his passing away. On looking at a map of India once, he asked and was told what the red patches on it signified. He heaved a sigh and said: "*Ek din sab lal ho jaiga*" "One day the whole map will become red." Even he, however, never anticipated that the fabric which had taken the Sikhs a hundred years to raise and the kingdom which had taken him forty years to consolidate would be shattered to pieces almost as soon as he breathed his last. This is what actually happened. His son Kharg Singh who succeeded him was a weak-minded man and was utterly devoid of the gifts which had enabled his father to keep everybody under control. Even Kharg Singh's own son and heir Naunihal Singh had no regard or respect for him or his feelings. Soon after his father's accession and in his presence in the open court, Naunihal Singh ran his sword through Chet Singh, a personal friend and favourite courtier of Kharg Singh. "Damn this Durbar"

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

said Kharg Singh and cursed his son for the murder of an innocent man. The shock was too much for him, he fell ill and expired when he had hardly occupied the throne for a year. His curse soon had its effect upon his own son. When Naunihal Singh was returning from the river side after cremating his father and was passing, with his friend Udham Singh, through the Northern gate of Hazuri Bagh, a parapet which some one had loosened for the purpose fell upon both, with the result that Udham Singh was killed on the spot and Naunihal Singh was severely wounded, and in a few days succumbed to his injuries. His death, as it were, opened the flood-gates to anarchy in the higher Government quarters. Kharg Singh's widow, Rani Chand Kaur, took, over the reins of Government in her hands, Raja Dhyan Singh continuing as Prime Minister. Sher Singh who was then Governor of Batala hastened to Lahore for condolence and also to see if he had any chance to seize the throne. Chand Kaur was suspicious and gave instructions for his murder as soon as he stepped into the palace. Raja Dhyan Singh warned the prince and he escaped. Soon, however, the Raja went on leave to Jammu and from there wrote to Sher Singh to reach Lahore with his troops. Sher Singh reached Lahore post-haste and after a sharp action with the Rani's troops he took possession of the fort and put the Rani under arrest. She was considered a standing menace to his power, so after a year or so he had her murder-

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

ed by her own maids. While dressing her hair they smashed her head with bricks. Sher Singh in order to escape a charge of abetment of the murder had the noses and ears of these maids cut and turned them out. This brutality raised the ire of Sandhanwalia Chiefs against Sher Singh, as, howsoever remote, they were Maharaja Ranjit Singh's collaterals and looked upon Sher Singh as a usurper, as his descent from the great Maharaja's loins was in doubt. On a *Sankranti* day Sher Singh had repaired to a garden near Hakikat Rai Dharmi's Samadh for performance of the usual *havan* and *puja*. Ajit Singh approached him and showed him a carbine which he said was of the latest type, and, while he was handing it over, he pressed the trigger to the carbine killing the Maharaja on the spot. In the meantime his uncle Lehna Singh rushed to Pratap Singh, the twelve year old son and heir of Sher Singh who was then busy with the Brahmans in havan, and inspite of his pathetic entreaties cut off his head.

Having finished the Maharaja and his heir the regicides hastened to the fort. They contacted the Prime Minister and while they were asking him where and how Rani Chand Kaur had been murdered, an orderly of theirs shot the Premier dead. The Sandhanwalias then approached the infant prince Dalip Singh, put on his forehead a *tika* with Raja Dhyan Singh's blood, performed four perambulations round him as a token of allegiance and

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

devotion, and told him that he was now the King of the Punjab and that they would always be at his service.

Hira Singh, son of Raja Dhyan Singh, was beside himself with rage when he heard of his father's murder. He took out his troops and did not take any food or drink until he had found and cut the Sandhanwalias to pieces after a most stubborn resistance by them.

It had now become plain that the reign of terror had begun and the life of no body who was anybody in the State was safe. It was then that the only man of understanding among the Sikhs, S. Lahna Singh Majithia,[1] left the Punjab in horror and disgust and went away on pilgrimage to Hardwar and other sacred places. He has been rightly accused of lack of patriotism. Being the most intelligent Sikh of the time he should have stood by his people in these troublous times, and, if necessary, fallen with them.

Dalip Singh, an infant of about four, was now the King and Hira Singh was the Prime Minister. Hira Singh was, however, entirely in the hands of a wily Brahman, Jalla Pandit, who was too domineering to suit the Sikh troops who were then getting out of hand. They had elected Panchayats of their own and

---

[1] He was the father of the famous philanthropist Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia, the founder of the Lahore Tribune and the Dyal Singh College of Lahore.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

were guided by their decisions alone, setting at naught all official orders and disciplinary measures which did not suit them. They invited Raja Suchet Singh of Jammu, an uncle of Hira Singh, to take charge of the Government as Prime Minister. He came but was defeated and killed by his nephew. The Army, however, made it too hot for Hira Singh and his factotum. They tried to escape to Jammu with the State elephants along with gold *Howdahs* and a good deal of treasure but were waylaid by the Sikhs and were both killed.

The army now selected Jawahar Singh, maternal uncle of DalipSingh as PrimeMinister. The Premier's office was no bed of roses. Perfect anarchy prevailed in the capital. Government had been deprived of all vestige of authority. The army had usurped all power. It had raised its pay and realized it on the point of bayonet. The Sikh soldiers went about looting the fort and the town with no one to stop them. Endless demands were made upon the Prime Minister which he could by no means satisfy. The Army that Ranjit Singh had taken so much pains to raise and make invincible had turned out now to be a monster which no one could control. In sheer exasperation, Jawahar Singh one day rode out on an elephant with the infant Maharaja to make an appeal to the troops assembled on a parade, with the Queen Mother sitting behind a *Kanat* curtain. He had hardly opened his lips when they lifted him out of the *Howdah* on their

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

bayonets and paying no heed to his abject entreaties cut him to pieces before the very eyes of the infant King and his mother, the famous Rani Jind Kaur or Jindan.

Not content with this outrage the murderers began to pour ridicule and heap insults on the queen "Why are you" they shouted to her "raising these loud wails for your wretched brother. He was no king's son. You should reward us with liberal gifts as you cannot rule without our help."

The Rani then and there seems to have made up her mind to destroy the Sikh element in the army as she was convinced that no one could control it. She matured her plans. She put herself in touch with British authorities and instigated them to provoke the Sikhs to war by taking possession of a part of the Sikh territory lying close to the left bank of Sutlej. She gave them an assurance that she would not finance the Sikh army and that only the unruly ranks of the Sikh army would offer resistance and could be easily beaten. On the other hand, she called the leaders of the Sikh troops and told them that her treasury was well nigh exhausted while the whole country between the Sutlej and the Jamna was lying unguarded and they could easily take it. The Sikhs, always eager to fight, easily fell into the trap and at once girt up their loins to fight the foreigners. The Rani sent away the French generals to Kashmir in spite of their

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

protests, detained Muslim troops at Lahore and sent the Sikhs to the front and to their doom. They never realized that they were being sent to the front as the Rani wanted to get rid of them. They marched in full strength elated by their victories over humbler foes. They fought four desperate actions with characteristic bravery and stubbornness which were all the more conspicuous as they were fighting without their regular commanders and almost without any discipline or definite plan of campaign or strategy. Fighting with these hand caps and badly betrayed, they were no match for the well-disciplined and better commanded British troops and were beaten in all the four battles inspite of their unrivalled gallantry and fanatical zeal.

Thus ended the first Sikh War. The British Government took a good bit of the Sikh territory as part of the indemnity while the balance was realised by the sale of Kashmir to Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu. In addition to this, British Residents were posted at Lahore and other important centres to advise the infant Maharaja and his mother and assist the local administrators.

In the course of this process British representatives were also sent to Multan. They were, however, murdered before they could take over charge. This led to the invasion of Multan by British forces, who, in the name of the Lahore Durbar, deposed

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Diwan Mulraj Chopra, the Governor of that Province after a good deal of stubborn resistance on his part, and brought him to Lahore as a prisoner and after a Court Martial trial deported him to Benares. Soon after this, trouble arose on the Frontier. S. Chatar Singh Attariwala was the Governor of Hazara with his Head Quarters at Haripore A British Officer, named Abbott, after whom Abbotabad is named, had been stationed there as the British Adviser to the Governor. Apparently at his instance a large force of trans-frontier tribesmen collected on the border. As they threatened to march upon Haripore, Sardar Chatar Singh ordered Col. Canora (an American) Commandant of the Artillery to open fire on the enemy. Canora who was apparently in league with Abbott declined and was instantly shot dead by the Sardar for disobedience. The Sardar himself took command and dispersed the invaders. Abbott reported him for murder. The Sardar was deposed and was ordered to report himself at Lahore to stand his trial for murder. He informed his son Raja Sher Singh of what had happened and collecting what troops and munitions he could lay his hands upon, marched towards Lahore, preferring to die fighting to being shot or hanged as a criminal. Raja Sher Singh rallied all the remnants of the Sikh forces which had been beaten in the Sutlej campaigns and were, therefore, burning with revenge, and marched North to meet his father. The father and the

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

son met at Chillianwala. Sher Singh had been followed by British troops and after some skirmishes it was here that the most bloody and famous battle was fought. The losses of the British were so heavy that orders for the recall of Lord Gough, the then Commander-in-Chief of British forces were issued. Before, however, the orders reached him he won a complete and decisive victory at Gujrat. This was the last battle between the British and the Sikhs and thus closed the second Sikh War. Sikh forces were disarmed and scattered and Sikh Power was crushed for ever. Soon after, in 1849, the whole of Ranjit Singh's kingdom was annexed and included in the red patches on the map of India which Ranjit Singh had watched with so much interest and concern.

Ranjit Singh was great, very great, but he had apparently built upon sand. His nation was utterly devoid of political sense. The Sikh fighting forces consisted of illiterate ploughmen entirely devoid of any feeling of patriotism. Their leaders, with few exceptions, were either too selfish or too cowardly, miserably lacking in national spirit and patriotic sentiment. Like rats deserting a sinking ship they slunk away to save their own skins. The infant Maharaja, helpless and forlorn, was taken away and sent to London and converted to Christianity while his mother had to flee and take refuge in Nepal. Thus ended the Kingdom and recognised line of Ranjit Singh.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

All that is now seen to remind one of the great Maharaja is an aged lady, one meets now and then in Lahore, a daughter of Maharaja Dalip Singh, long known to the Punjabis as Princess Bamba Dalip Singh, now known as Princess Bamba Sutherland, widow of the late Colonel Sutherland, the well-known physician and Principal of King Edward Medical College of Lahore.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER XXI

Later Developments

THE NAMDHARI SECT

This sect was founded by one Bhai Ram Singh. He had been serving as a soldier in the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. After the Khalsa Army was disbanded he developed a religious bent of mind and derived his inspiration from one Baba Balak Ram who was an Udasi Faqir of Hazro in the Campbellpore District. Baba Ram Singh was very gravely impressed by the deterioration of the Sikhs so far as the observance of orthodox practices was concerned and also by the loose living which had become common among the Sikhs during the heyday of their prosperity. He, therefore, made up his mind to reform the Sikhs and Sikhism by introducing a puritanical mode of life among them. He must have possessed a great deal of personal magnetism as in a very short time a large number of Sikhs rallied round him and became his devoted followers. His own personal life was of the purest kind and his disciples looked upon him as one in succession to the 10th Guru of the Sikhs His followers even now consider Baba Balak Ram as the 11th and Baba Ram Singh as the 12th Guru, although a majority

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

of the Sikhs do not accept this view. Gradually his followers developed into a sect known by the name of Namdharis or more popularly as Kukas. The sect claims a following of many lacs and they stand distinguished frogm other Sikhs by peculiarity of dress and puritanical mode of living. They are staunch vegetarians and total abstainers. They do not eat food cooked by non Namdharis. They wear Khadi clothes. They do not take their disputes to any British Law Court and in olden times refused to avail of Britlsh Posts and Telegraph Offices and other amenities provided by the British Government. They believe in a living Guru and are strongly bound to him by devotion to his person and would carry out his commands even at the risk of their lives.

The original movement was purely religious which aimed at reforming the Sikh practice and restore it to its original character. As, however, the sect grew in numbers, its ambition increased till at last it preached a revival of the Khalsa and, as pointed out by Sir Lepel Griffin, the downfall of the British Government.

In the early eighties of the last century the more enthusiastic among them were carried away by their hatred of the Mussalmans who gave them offence by slaughtering cows which to the Namdharis are as sacred as to the other Sikhs and Hindus. Some

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

butchers at Amritsar were murdered by a number of them and, of course, they were hanged.[1]

Soon after that a number of Kukas attacked the town of Malerkotla, the Capital of the Muslim State of that name. The insurrection was put down with great severity and some 50 of the rebels were blown from guns after summary trial by the authorities of the Ambala Division. At the same time all the Namdhari leaders in different parts of the Punjab were arrested in one night and deported, some to Rangoon, others to the Andemans and the less important were confined in Punjab Jails. Guru Ram Singh himself was

---

1. The inflexibility of their faith and their reverence for the cow is shown by the fact that after a number of these murderers were arrested a young boy come forward and declared that he should also be arrested as he was one of those who had taken part in murdering the butchers. He was told to keep quiet as the police had not taken any action against him but he insisted as he considered that it was a martyrdom to die for the protection of the cows. The effect of Guru Ram Singh's teachings on some of his followers was remarkable. Another of his followers who had committed a murder long before he became his disciple in the District of Gujranwala went to the District Magistrate, after he had joined the sect, and made a confession to him. On being asked why he was making confession of such a serious offence, which was punishable with death, after such a long time, he said it was all due to the grace of Guru Ram Singh.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

sent to Rangoon and was never allowed to return from that place. Since then the Namdharis all over the Province have been kept under a sort of surveillance which was relaxed only a few years ago. They subsided into a quiet sect and were not much heard of for a long time. Their activities, however, have been renewed and their prestige has increased under the present Head of the sect, Guru Partap Singh, a nephew of Baba Ram Singh. The present strength of the sect is said to be round about seven lacs.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER XXII

Recent Developments

On the annexation of the Punjab in 1849 the star of Sikh power set for ever. The Sikh armies were disbanded and all vestige of Sikh power was obliterated from the Punjab. The Trans-Sutlej Sikh States had already sought the protection of the British Government and they continue upto this time as its feudatories. For eight years no part was played by the Sikhs as such in the politics of India. The Mutiny came in 1857 and that gave a chance to the disbanded soldiers of Maharaja Ranjit Singh to renew their military activities. The British Government was in great straits in those days and its representatives in the Punjab approached the Sikh leaders for assistance in its hour of need. The Sikhs had just lost their kingdom and had hated the British from the bottom of their hearts but simple folks, as they were, they were easily persuaded to forget their hatred. A clever appeal was made to their sentiment in the name of their Ninth Guru who had been executed in Delhi and it was pointed out that it was an excellent opportunity for them to wreak their vengeance on the Moghul successor of Aurangzeb, the murderer of their Guru and on the town of Delhi itself. Moreover, those Sikhs who had

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

followed the profession of arms for several generations could not easily turn their hands to the plough and welcomed this opportunity as it held out promises of jagirs and pensions etc. They joined in large numbers and distinguished themselves in many a battlefield. It is no exaggeration to say that but for their timely assistance the British Government would have found it very difficult to quell the Mutiny. The Sikhs now became famous for their loyalty and, in fact, became special favourites of the British Government. This loyalty of theirs was not merely lip loyalty but it seems that their hearts had actually been won by the British by frequent pattings on their backs and by praising their bravery and loyalty on all public occasions. I remember that when Queen Victoria died, a Sikh Sirdar of an important town in the Doaba took a big pot of curd to a well and invited all the Sikhs to wash their hair as a sign of mourning on the Great Queen's death whom he described as not only his own mother but the mother of the whole Khalsa.

The sacred Darbar Sahib (The Golden Temple at Amritsar) was placed under official control and so was practically the greatest educational institution of the Sikhs, the Khalsa College of Amritsar. The Commissioner of Lahore was the President, and the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar, the Director of Public Instruction, the Political Agent and the Principal were appointed the ex-officio

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Members by the Government to the College Council.

This wave of loyalty continued till 1913. In that year, however, an incident occurred in Delhi which seriously offended the religious feelings of the Sikhs. Imperial Delhi was being built at that time and with a view to giving splendour and beauty to the new Capital, the Government considered it necessary to demolish the outer walls of the well-known Gurdwara of Guru Tegh Bahadur, called Sri Rakab Ganj, to include a portion of its premises in the road passing by it. The leaders of the community considered it an insult to their religion and were thinking of launching agitation against it when the First Great War broke out. A sort of patched up peace was made by the Government with the Sikhs and the matter remained in suspense during the war. In 1918 the war came to an end but the walls of the Gurdwara were still found demolished. Some time passed in negotiations. At last a leader of the Sikhs, Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar, appealed for the lives of one hundred Sikhs who could march from their homes with "shrouds on their heads" and re-erect the walls to their former position even if it cost them their lives. Hundreds of Sikhs responded to the appeal and offered their heads for the "*Shahidi Jatha*" (Band of Martyrs) However, on the intervention of the late Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha, who was helped by Sir Edward

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Maclagan, the then Governor of the Punjab, a settlement of the problem was brought about. The walls of the Gurdwara were re-erected and the Sikh sentiment was pacified. This was the first *Morcha* and the first victory of the Sikhs.

Immediately on the heels of this incident came the "Budge Budge Ghat tragedy" when a group of Sikhs returning from Canada were killed or wounded by British bullets. Some Sikhs were also killed in the now notorious massacre in which General Dyer indulged in the Jallianwala Bagh in April 1919.

These incidents gave a rude shock to the loyalty of the Sikhs and it so happened that a series of incidents occurred which almost entirely destroyed the cordial relations which had existed between the Government and the Sikhs for the last sixty years or so. Complaints had reached Sikh leaders about various kinds of iniquities which were being practised in the Janam Asthan Gurdwara at Nankana Sahib, the birth place of Guru Nanak. The Sikhs resolved to take the management of the Gurdwara in their own hands as they had already taken over the management of the Golden Temple and of Akal Takht, two of the most important holy places of Sikhs in Amritsar. Accordingly a band of Sikhs, under the leadership of one Bhai Lachhman Singh, proceeded to take possession of the Gurdwara and entered the Gurdwara as if they were

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

ordinary pilgrims. The Mahant of the Gurdwara (Narain Das) had apprehended such an attempt on the part of the Sikhs. He had stored a number of revolvers and plenty of ammunition in the Gurdwara and had engaged a considerable number of Pathans to give a warm reception to the Sikhs. Hardly did the Sikh "Pilgrims" take their seats in the Gurdwara when the Mahant's men opened fire on them. A large number of the Sikhs were killed and it is said that their dead bodies and even some wounded Sikhs were thrown in a pit where big fire had already been lighted for the unceremonious cremation of the intruders. The attitude of the Government in this episode did not satisfy the Sikhs. The biographer of Master Tara Singh has stated that "Instead of showing any practical sympathy with the Sikhs several Government officers actually showed their anxiety to belittle the gravity of the happening." The matter was taken to the Indian Legislative Council and insinuations were made on the floor of the House against certain officials but these insinuations were vehemently condemned by Sir Malcolm, now Lord Hailey. Whether these insinuations were well-founded or not, the impression created among the Sikhs as a community was unfavourable to the Government.

Other incidents leading to the further dissatisfaction of the Sikhs followed in quick succession. On the 7th of November 1921,

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the District Magistrate of Amritsar took away the keys of the *Tosha Khana* of the Golden Temple. This gave rise to the so-called "Keys Agitation". Widespread agitation followed this action of the Deputy Commissioner. In order to put an end to the agitation, the provisions of the Seditious Meetings Act were invoked and many of the Sikh leaders including Baba Kharak Singh, Master Tara Singh and the late S. B. Mehtab Singh, who had been Deputy President of the Punjab Legislative Council and a Public Prosecutor, were tried, convicted and sentenced to various terms of rigorous imprisonment. After about 200 leaders and workers had been arrested the Government modified its policy of repression and all the prisoners of the "keys agitation" were released and the keys themselves were handed over to the Sikhs. The Government issued a communique in which it stated "The Sikh community as a whole has been, for more than 70 years, the firm friend of the Government and a stout upholder of the law and it is to be hoped that the cordial relations which have hitherto been maintained between the Sikhs and the Government may continue uninterrupted".

Further incidents, however, happened which falsified the hopes entertained in the communique. The next episode in this part of the history of the Sikhs pertains to the agitation which centred round the wearing of swords by the Sikhs. The Sikhs are required

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

to wear a *Kirpan* as one of the *Kakaas* enjoined by Guru Govind Singh but till then they had been content in most cases with carrying, generally concealed, a small model of a sword, sometimes so small that some Sikhs carried it in the knot of their hair. A movement was started in favour of wearing full sized swords. The Government did not approve of this innovation, as they considered it, with the result that some 1700 black turbaned Sikhs, popularly called Akalis, were arrested in a number of selected Districts of the Punjab and in the States of Patiala and Kapurthala and many Sikh leaders including a number of pensioners were convicted and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. Ultimately, however, the Government conceded the Sikh demand and the ban on full sized swords was removed. Later on, it may be noted, the keeping of the sword was exempted from the operation of the Arms Act not only in the case of the Sikhs but for all communities.

Another incident which led to serious agitation related to the demand of the Sikhs to cut fuel from a place called Guru ka Bagh. The Mahant of this place had refused to submit to the dictates of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee and the Sikhs wanted to take possession of the Bagh by a show of force although without using any violence. The result was that band after band of Sikhs was sent to Guru ka Bagh from

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the city of Amritsar with strict injunctions to remain non-violent and to bear all hardships and excesses on the part of the police without any retaliation. The agitation assumed formidable proportions so much so that the working committee of the Indian National Congress decided on the 17th of September 1922 to appoint an Enquiry Committee consisting of a number of leading lawyers and others including Mr. S. C. Stokes, an American Missicnary, living in Simla Hills. As shown by the report of this Committee, hundreds of Akalis who attempted to reach Guru ka Bagh were beaten by the police with Lathis. The Jathas or bands of Sikhs were stopped miles away from Guru ka Bagh and "the use of force was persisted in again and again" with the result that several cases of skull injuries resulting in concussion of brain and unconsciousness occurred. The Akalis took all this beating without any resistance or any attempt at retaliation. "Divesting ourselves of all political bias", say the members of the Committee, "we consider that the excesses committed reflect the greatest discredit on the Punjab Government and are a disgrace to any civilized Government. We have no hesitation whatever to come to the conclusion that the force used, judged from all aspects, was altogether excessive. We are constrained to observe that the arbitrary and lawless way in which violence was resorted to, was deliberate and in callous disregard of such humanity as even a Government is bound to show. Lastly we cannot help expressing our

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

profound admiration for the spirit of martyrdom and orderliness whith animated the Akalis and for their unflinching adhérence to the gospel of non-violence and for the noble way in which they have vindicated themselves under circumstances of prolonged and unusual exasperation."

This agitation ultimately came to an end through the intercession of the late Sir Ganga Ram, the well-known Hindu philanthropist of Lahore. With the help of the Government and the Mahant he acquired this garden and made it over to the Akalis. This was another victory for the Sikhs.

A more serious agitation, however, had still to come. This was caused by the deposition of Maharaja Ripduman Singh of Nabha. It is believed that he was in sympathy with the Akali movement. He was also considered too independent to suit the Political Department. It is stated that on his installation to the Gaddi of Nabha he refused to present any Nazrana to the Political Agent and did not invite the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab on the occasion. A widespread agitation was started by the Sikh leaders, headed by Master Tara Singh, and as a link in the agitation *Akhand Path* was held at a Sikh Gurdwara at Jaito in the Nabha State ostensibly to pray for the restoration of the Maharaja. The Nabha police entered the Gurdwara and arrested the Akali workers and

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the reciters of the Granth Sahib. The *Akhand Path* which is considered a very sacred ceremony by the Sikhs was thus interrupted. It was considered a great affront to their religious feelings. The result was that a band of 500 Akali stalwarts with cries of *Sat Sri Akal*, marched from Amritsar towards Jaito to assert their right of free worship and to demonstrate their resentment to the Administrator of Nabha. The Jatha was stopped as soon as it entered the Nabha territory and was suddenly fired upon by the order of Wilson Johnstone, the then Administrator of the State, resulting in about fifty killed and over one hundred injured. Those who survived were tried in the Nabha courts and on the charges of violence and sedition were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment ranging upto 10 years. Another Shahidi Jatha of 500 men was organised and, in spite of Mahatma Gandhi's message that the Jatha should not proceed, it marched from Akal Takht in Amritsar towards Jaito. No firing was resorted to this time but all its members were arrested. A state of war was thus declared and Jatha after Jatha poured into Jaito to assert their right of free worship. Some of these pilgrims were shot down, some died in Jails, it was alleged, for want of proper care and on account of brutal treatment; others were kept in Nabha prisons under conditions unworthy of a civilized administration. As things became serious and beyond the control of the Nabha State the Punjab Government joined in the affray.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee and the Shiromani Akali Dal were declared unlawful bodies and almost all important Sikh leaders were arrested and thrown into prisons. This led to what is known in the Sikh history of recent times as the well known Akali Leaders' Case. It lasted for about three years. Before, however, the case concluded, the Government of India took the initiative in its own hands and appointed General Sir William Birdwood, the then Commander-in-Chief of India, to negotiate for peace with the Sikhs. His attempts, however, failed and the trial of strength between the Government and the Sikhs continued. Thousands of Sikhs were arrested and imprisoned and the agitation became more and more serious every day. This led the Government to reconsider its position with the result that the policy of repression had to be abandoned both in Nabha and the Punjab. Twelve Shahidi Jathas had been dealt with at Nabha but the 13th was now left untouched and it marched triumphantly to the Gurdwara at Jaito. At the same time Sir Malcolm Hailey, the Governor of the Punjab, opened negotiations with the Akalis and showed his readiness to assist them in taking possession of all the important Gurdwaras in the Province. It was agreed by the moderate section of the Sikhs that a Gurdwara Bill should be prepared and passed in the Legislative Council with the help of the Government, and that all the Akali leaders who agreed to work the Gurdwara Act, when passed, should be released.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

This Gurdwara Bill was passed in 1925 with the result that all the important Gurdwaras in the Punjab passed into the hands of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee.

The Sikhs thus triumphed in their agitation but the result was that the relations between the Sikhs and the Government were strained and British confidence in the devotion and loyalty of the Sikhs was apparently shaken. It will be noted that while formerly in the British Indian Army out of 47% of the Punjab, N. W. F. P. and Kashmir quota, the Sikhs represented 19.2, in 1930 their strength was reduced to 13.58. Government's confidence has shifted on to the Mussalmans who had lost it in consequence of the Mutiny. The result has been that whereas the Punjabi Mussalmans in 1914 were only 11.1 per cent, in 1930 they rose to 22.2 per cent.[1]

On the declaration of the second Great War the relations between the Sikhs and the British Government for obvious reasons underwent a change for the better. The Sikh leaders with His Highness the Maharaja of Patiala at their head, established a Khalsa Defence League and started a vigorous propaganda for Sikh recruitment to the Army. The Government welcomed this move and encouraged the Sikhs by giving them one seat on the Lahore High Court Bench and one in the Executive Council of the Viceroy.

---

1. Thoughts on Pakistan by Dr. Ambedkar. p. 75 (1st Edition).

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

CHAPTER XXIII

The Future of the Sikhs

The Sikhs are not much more than one percent of the total population of India. They, however, enjoy an importance and influence both with the Government and the people far above their numerical strength. There are several reasons for this. The first is the prestige enjoyed by them as the latest and comparatively recent rulers of the Punjab. Added to it is the prestige acquired by them as the helpers of the British Government in quelling the Mutiny of 1857 and the distinction won by them as one of the best fighting units in the British Indian Army. Their present strength in the Army is also proportionately much above their population. They are also the best organised community in India. Inspite of the acute differences among their present leaders, they can promptly close their ranks when and where Sikh interests, as such, are concerned. Their tradition of sacrifice and suffering for their faith still inspires them to daring deeds showing unrivalled capacity for resistance, sacrifice, and suffering. There was plenty of evidence of this strength in the various *Morchas* referred to before. Then again the Sikh Gurdwaras Act, passed in 1925 and amended in 1945 to

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the great advantage of their Central Board, has placed their Communal Organisation on an official and firm basis. This Central Board of Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee popularly known as S.G.P.C. is a Statutory Body elected by the Sikhs of all castes and classes including about twenty nominees of Sikh ruling Chiefs. It has got supreme control of hundreds of important Gurdwaras and collects a revenue of about 20 lacs a year from the endowments attached to these shrines. So far as their religious affairs and organization are concerned, the Sikhs have established, so to say, on *imperium in imperio*. It has enabled their Central Board to employ hundreds of preachers who are not mere reciters of sacred texts but are virtually their political agents, not only propagating the Sikh religious views but also consolidating the Community and watching their social and political interests. They are the most vociferous and effective propagandists in India at the present time. The Sikhs have been equally alive to the importance of modern education. They have several degree colleges and numerous High Schools all over the Punjab. There is not a department in public services or any aspect of public life in which the Sikhs do not play an important part and do not make their influence felt. The power and importance of the Sikhs are not only recognized by the Government and the general public but are equally realised by the Indian National Congress as it was greatly impressed by the heroic

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

sacrifices made by them in the national cause. This is shown by the fact that the Congress was forced to include their colour in its national flag and to give an informal assurance to the Sikhs that no constitutional pacts would be entered into without consulting their leaders.

Such is the Khalsa at present. If the Sikhs had been half so communally conscious and half so well organised in the middle of the 18th century, they would have easily founded a powerful Sikh Kingdom fifty years before the rise of Ranjit Singh, and Ranjit Singh's power would have been ten times greater. What is more, the Sikhs might still have been ruling over the Punjab and the N. W. F. Provinces. The awakening has come to the Khalsa about one century too late.

What is their future? It is anything but dark. However, considering everything it is apparent that the best days of the Khalsa are altogether behind them. One great handicap which is very serious in these days of democracy, is their comparatively small number. In times of trouble, when regular Government had ceased to exist, a fleet horse and a sharp blade were great assets, and under the Guru's inspiration, one Sikh might have been a match for "Sawalakh" Muslims, but in times of peace under a strong and constitutional Government, one Sikh, however brave, is only one and no better in respect of voting

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

power than an ordinary man in his village. There is no chance of the present Government yielding place to any but a constitutional and at least an equally strong Government, so that the chances of the sword carving once more the Khalsa's way to glory are extremely remote.

Nor can the Sikhs secure an effective accretion to their numbers. The natural growth in population cannot be very great and their relative proportion would still be about the same. As regards conversion, their only recruiting ground is the Hindu community, particularly the so called lower castes, and the Sikhs did gain some recruits from among the depressed classes. The Hindus tolerated their activities as they never considered the Sikhs as anything but Hindus. Some prominent Hindus have in fact been financing the Sikh movement for converting the Hindu depressed classes to Sikhism. Recently, however, the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee formally declared that the Sikhs were not Hindus. The Hindu organizations, therefore, became alert and took active steps to prevent all sorts of inroads into their communal preserves. In most places the converts were reconverted. The result of the public declarations made by some over-zealous Sikh preachers that they are not Hindus may be the total closure of this the only recruiting ground open to the Sikhs. Formerly many Hindus even of higher castes, out of regard for Sikh

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Gurus and believing that they were Hindus and had rendered great services to their community, did not mind if any member of their family kept long hair and called himself a Sikh. Now they may hesitate to create a schism in their homes and may as carefully guard against any one of their children becoming a Sikh as they would against his going into any other religion. Another advantage that the Sikhs possessed was the privilege of carrying a sword which no Hindu or Mussalman could carry without a licence. This served as a powerful attraction to young folks to join Sikh ranks. A few years ago, however, this distinction was removed and now all Punjabees can keep and carry swords as freely as the Sikhs.

The recruitment to the army was another strong point in favour of the Sikhs as only members of the so called martial classes were accepted for the purpose. This discrimination favoured the Sikhs as most of them are Jats who are recognised as a prominent martial tribe. Recently, however, this restriction has also been officially removed. Sir Charles Ogilvie, as Defence Secretary of India, while answering a question in the Central Legislative Assembly, declared that no such distinction was recognised by the Government and that it was purely a creation of the politicians.

It will thus appear that the Sikhs have been deprived of several advantages. In

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

addition to this loss there are fairly perceptible indications of a positive danger facing the Sikh community as it undoubtedly faces, more or less, every other community. This danger lies in the increasing indifference of our young people to religion, particularly, symbols of religion. Whereas the Hindu youth are feeling it irksome to wear the sacred thread, the feellng is growing among the Sikhs of the younger generation that the Sikh symbols do not possess any intrinsic sanctity but are merely parts of the uniform which the tenth Guru prescribed for his fighting followers. More Sikh writers than one, have recently given expression to this view. The danger lies in the growth of this idea.

However, a safeguard against this potential danger has been provided by the political constitution of India. It is fundamentally based upon communal distinctions leading to communal electorates, reservation of seats on a communal basis in the Legislatures and fixation of communal percentages in public services and even for purposes of admission to educational institutions. These distinctions, though extremely detrimental to the growth of nationalism in the country, constitute a strong preservative for communalism and communal symbols as they insure some mundane advantages particularly for entry into public services.

The Sikh leaders, moreover, are conscious of the trend of modern ideas and of the

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

approaching danger. They are, therefore, straining every nerve to improve their solidarity and increase their strength, both numerical and political. Voluminous literature, in English as well as in Gurmukhi, is being produced by them for propagating Sikh religious views to prevent Sikh youth from drifting into irreligiousness as well as to gain fresh recruits. They seem to feel that if their propaganda is allowed to relax there is a danger of the Sikhs being reabsorbed by the Hindus. After the death of Guru Govind Singh and the execution of his followers along with Banda, Sikh propaganda came to an end with the result that during the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Sikhism had completely lapsed into orthodox Hinduism, and, inspite of Sikh ascendancy, the population of long-haired Sikhs had considerably gone down. It is to prevent a similar contingency that the Sikh leaders are making all sorts of efforts and their efforts have not been in vain. They have not only kept their community in tact but have succeeded in considerably increasing their population which is now much more than it was in the palmiest days of Sikh power.

In the political field they have for obvious reasons abandoned the high-minded or high-brow policy of their remote predecessors who disdained to accept any gifts or honours from Muslim Kings so much so that they led a Muslim King to exclaim, *Azin Qaum bu-i-padshahi mi ayad* "this community smells of

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

sovereignty." They fully realize that those days are gone never to return and that their safety and welfare now lie in power-politics. They do not, therefore, lose any opportunity of capturing any good post or place of power which they can lay their hands upon in public services and civil administration of every description. While mere Hindus enjoy no weightage in the Legislatures or in public services, the Sikhs have been given a considerable weightage both in the Legislatures and in public services. At the same time their leaders try to keep themselves as much in the good books of national organisations as in the good books of the Government.

While setting their house in order and consolidating their strength in British India they have not neglected the Sikh feudatory States. Whether by persuasion or otherwise they have spared no means to secure a dominant position for the Sikhs in these States and to give a distinctly Sikh complexion to their administration.

In their negotiations with the Hindus they have proved themselves to be good bargain-drivers and have generally managed to gain their points. A favourite and usually effective weapon they have employed to gain their ends is the threat, whether express or implied, to join the Mussalmans, in case the Hindus hesitated to yield to their demands. Some of them have wielded the same weapon

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

with some success even in their negotiations with the Mussalmans.

It is thus clear that although the Sikhs cannot entertain any hopes of recovering their sovereignty in the Punjab they are and will always continue to be a powerful and effective minority, having a potent voice not only in the affairs of their own province but even in matters affecting the whole of India. The chief aim of the Sikh leaders at present is to make their community numerically and politically so strong that both Hindus and Mussalmans of the Punjab may look upto them for support. It is quite possible that if they play their cards well and communal basis of the constitution continues, the voice of the Sikhs may become the deciding factor in the future affairs of the Punjab. It is bound to be so if a new province, adumbrated as the Azad Punjab, which can be created out of the Central and Eastern districts of the Punjab becomes an accomplished fact.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

APPENDIX I

The Sikh Scriptures

Pefore proceeding with an examination of Sikh doctrines it seems necessary to say a few words about the Sikh Scriptures.

The Sacred books of the Sikhs are two, the *Adi Granth* and the *Dasam Granth*, the latter being also known as *Daswen Padshah ka Granth* or the Book of the Tenth King.

The *Adi Granth* commands much more respect, and is much more widely read, forming, in fact, the Bible of the Sikhs. The following points may be considered here in connection with this book :—

I. **Authorship**. The Granth consists of the works of thirty-six writers who may be classified as follows :—

(*a*) Seven Sikh Gurus, three, *viz.*, the sixth, seventh and eighth contributing nothing, and the tenth only one line which is also of doubtful origin.[1]

---

1. Dr. Trumpp says it forms the reply sent by Govind to his father's letter which the latter is said to have written from his captivity. Munshi Sohan Lal also quotes the verse. See his *Tarikh-i-Ranjit Singh*, F. 69.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

(*b*) Fourteen Bhaktas or Saints, one of whom, *viz.*, Farid was a Muhammadan, if, of course, we accept, Kabir, who, though born of Muhammadan parents, was a Hindu by faith. Of the rest, four, *viz.*, Jai Dev, Trilochan, Sur Das, and Ramanand were Brahmans, one, *viz.*, Pipa a Raja, two, *viz.*, Bhikam and Beni, of unknown caste, Dhanna a Jat and the other four of the Sudra class, *viz*, Nam Dev was a calico-printer, Sain a barber, Sadan a butcher and Ravidas a cobbler.

(*c*) Fifteen Bhatts[1] or minstrels, all Brahmans[2] whose panegyrics on the first five Gurus were incorporated by the fifth Guru himself. (It would thus appear that 75 per cent. of the authors of the Granth were Hindus by faith as well as by birth, if, of course, the Gurus themselves are to be regarded as Sikhs and not as Hindus.)

II. **Compilation**. The work of compilation was done by Arjun, the fifth Guru, who

---

1. They are Bhalhau, Bhika, Das, Ganga, Haribans, Jallan, Jalap, Kal, Kalas, Kalashar, Kirat, Mathura, Nal, Rad, Sal.

2. According to the author of the *Panth Prakash*.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

procured the works of the first three Gurus from Mohan, the son of the third Guru, and making selections from the works of the Bhaktas collected them together along with his own and his father's writings, into one volume to which were added the panegyrics of the Bhatts. The poetic name of all the Gurus being Nanak,[1] he added Mahalla I, Mahalla II, and so on, to the works of the first, second and other Gurus respectively to distinguish the one from the other, noting also the name of the *Rag* in which a particular stanza might be most suitably sung. The names of the authors with the names of suitable *Rags* were likewise attached to the works of the various Bhaktas.[2] The present arrangement of the *Adi Granth* is due to the genius of Bhai Mani Singh, the martyr. He recast the whole book and arranged it again so as to group together

---

1. It is a belief with the Sikhs that the same spirit descended upon the successors of Nanak, so that, though physically different, they were spiritually all one with the first Guru. Har Govind, the sixth Guru, in the letters to Muhsin Fani, the author of the *Dabistan*, always signed himself Nanak.

2. Trumpp laments the loss of the works of most of these *Bhaktas*. He might have derived some consolation from the traditions referred to by the author of the *Panth Prakash* that the portions of the *Granth* assigned to some of the *Bhaktas* were in reality composed by Guru Arjun himself.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the works of each writer composed in a particular *Rag*.[1]

III. **Language.** The language of the *Adi Granth* is a mixture of almost all the Aryan languages current in India. There are some stanzas which are very much like Sanskrit, *e.g.*, the contributions of Jai Dev, the famous Jaya Deva, the author of Gita Govinda. One or two stanzas are in pure Persian, which, though full of meaning, can have no pretensions to linguistic excellence. The contributions of Nam Dev and Trilochan, who belonged to the Deccan, bear a strong impress of Marathi on them.

The main body of the book is, however, composed in Hindi which is either the pure Hindi of those times used, *e.g.*, in Ramanand and Kabir's works or its corrupted form which may be called the immediate predecessor of the modern Punjabi.[2]

---

1. This is given on the authority of the author of *Panth Prakash*. Neither Trumpp nor any other English Historian has noticed the fact. The first copy of *Adi Granth* is in the possession of the Sodhis of Kartarpur which can be seen by offering *Karah Prasad* worth Rs. 1/4/-. Maharaja Ranjit Singh had it sent to Lahore in 1831 A.D. when he bestowed a Jagir of Rs. 50,000 on its custodians.

2. It is remarkable that almost all *Bhaktas* whether in Bengal or Maharashtra or up in the Punjab wrote their works in the Hindi of those days. Hindi, or rather Hindui, as Trumpp calls the older

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

The tone of the whole compilation is Hindu in all its details:—

(1) The figures of speech and the parables are generally those taken from the Upanishads or more modern works on the Vedanta Philosophy.

(2) The mythological allusions are almost always taken from the Puranas, the personages of semitic mythology being seldom mentioned, except when the person addressed was perhaps a Muhammadan.

(3) The names of God are mostly those used by Hindus, although Allah and Khuda are occasionally met with.

(4) The metres are without exception those employed by Hindi poets. Even the Persian stanza is written in a metre which is more Hindi than Persian.

Hindi, seems to have been the *lingua franca* of India or at any rate to have occupied the position held by Sanskrit in the past, and by English at the present time.

Anyone who wanted to reach larger audiences spoke through the medium of Hindi. This fact is noticed by Trumpp. It is also remarkable that older dialects of the Deccan and the Punjab, etc., were much more akin in Hindi than their present successors.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

IV. **Contents.** To analyse the contents of the *Adi Granth* is to analyse Sikhism as it existed before the modifications introduced by the new dispensation of the last Guru. As I propose to deal with the subject at some length in the following chapter, I think it sufficient to simply enumerate the various parts which form the body of the *Adi Granth.* They are as follows :—

(1) The *Japji* of Guru Nanak, a devotional piece enjoined to be recited with the morning prayer.

(2) *So Dar* (that door) consisting of extracts from the body of the book, recited with the evening prayer.

(3) *So Purkh* (that Supreme Being) also recited with evening prayer.

(4) *Sohila* (song of praise) recited when going to bed.

(5) The body of the book classified according to *Rags*, types or stanzas.

(6) The *Bhog* or the Epilogue or conclusion consisting of miscellaneous matter containing some pieces by the Gurus themselves, Kabir and Farid and the penegyrics of the Brahman bards.

V. **Nature of the Contents.**—The main part of the book consists of songs in praise

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

of the Supreme Being and the Guru, or prayers,[1] with a few controversial passages or direct exhortations or sermons There is absolutely no dissertation on any particular subject and no stories of Gurus' lives or miracles. The very nature of the contents of the Granth could not, therefore, yield to any rigid classification based upon a community or similarity of the subject dealt with It is, therefore, no wonder that Trumpp complains of a lack of order and classification in the Granth Sahib. The teachings of the Gurus about morality, as well as their doctrines and beliefs, lie scattered all over the book, and must be gathered by a careful study of the whole volume. To me the constitution of the Granth appears to resemble that of the Rig-Veda much more than any other book, with this difference that whereas the Veda generally deals with the same subject in the same stanza, the Granth does not confine itself to any particular subject even in one stanza. All that the Gurus say is, therefore, said indirectly and by implication. They do not assert and expound their beliefs but leave them to be inferred by the reader. Being a

---

8. Dr. Trumpp says "Prayer to the Supreme is hardly ever mentioned in the *Granth*" (p. cx.) The statement is simply absurd, and literally hundreds of prayers to the Supreme could be produced from the book. It simply proves what Professor Max Muller said about Trumpp's untrustworthiness. *Auld Lang Syne*, p. 69.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

collection of so many authors, uniformity of belief or theological doctrine could not be expected. Even the compositions of the same author are not free from apparent inconsistencies. There is, for instance, no appreciation of the distinction between *dvatism* and *advaitism*.

The second sacred book of the Sikhs, as mentioned above is the Granth of the Tenth King. It is a miscellaneons collection and only a part forms the Guru's own work, the rest being written by a number of Hindi poets, whom the Guru kept in his service. The collection does not do credit to the Guru's name, and much of it, except the Guru's own compositions, might well have been omitted. The book does not command much respect among cultured Sikhs who look upon most of its contents as spurious.

Its literary and poetic merit is, however, very great and some of its portions deserve the very highest place in the ranks of Hindi poetry of the narrative and epic kind.

The book, moreover, serves as an excellent index to the part played in Guru Govind Singh's life and activities by Hindu Theology, Mythology, Philosophy, History and Literature, and as such a brief outline of its contents will not be out of place here.

It is apparently a collection of many books of various sizes. And the subjects dealt

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

with seem to be as various. The main theme, however, of the whole collection is either the glorification of God to the exclusion of all other objects of worship, or the glorification of arms with the object of encouraging the Sikhs to fight bravely. The accounts of the doings of the mythical heroes of the Puranas have all one and the same purpose, the incitement to war and the eulogy of physical strength and courage. The stories of women's wiles also seem to have the same end in view, to warn the Sikhs from falling into their traps. The contents of the books are as follows :—

(1) **Japji.** A complement of Nanak's Japji, the morning prayer of the Sikhs. It is a vigorous little poem in Sanskritic language, though, to suit the exigencies of rhyme, Persian and even commonplace Punjabi words are introduced. It is supposed to be the Guru's own composition.

(2) **Akala Stuti**, Praises of the Undying One, a hymn to be recited in the morning.[1]

(3) **The Vichitra Natak** or the Wondrous Drama, Govind's own composition, forming an account of his family, his mission of reformation and

---

1. Cunningham says "the initiatory verse alone is the composition of Govind." (*History of the Sikhs*, 2nd ed., appendix XVIII).

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

his wars with the hill Rajas and the imperial forces. The account given by the Guru of his previous life and the circumstances which led to his birth reads like an episode from the Puranas, and all its details are saturated with the spirit of Hindu mythology.

(4) **Chandi Charitra** or the "Exploits of of Chandi," the goddess, translated from the Sanskrit, according to some, by Govind himself. The wars of the goddess with the demons are described in epic verse of a kind which has no parallel in the Hindi literature. The names of the daityas destroyed are as follows:—

Madhoo Kaitabh Mahikhasur, Dhumra Lochun, Chund, Mund, Rakta Bij, Nishumbha and Shumbha.

The *second part* of the same.

Chandee ki Var, a supplement to the above.

(5) **Jnana Prabhodha** taken from the Mahabharata devoted to the praise of God with illustrations from ancient history of the Hindus.

(6) **Chaupayan** or Quatrains which describe the twenty-four incarnations of Shiva.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

(7) **Shastra-nama Mala** or the Name-string of weapons enumerating all kinds of arms used in the warfare of those days.

(8) **Savayya Batees.** Thirty-two stanzas composed by the Guru himself in condemnation of idolatry, Phariseeism and sectarian prejudice and bigotry, extolling the love of God above all nominal adherenee to the Puranas and the Koran.

(9) **Shabd Hazara** ten stanzas of Govind's own composition in adoration of God and condemnation of the worship of minor divinities and saints.

(10) **Stri Charitra**, or the "wiles of women," described in 404 stories which occupy nearly one-half of the whole collection.

(11) **Hikayat** or Tales. These are twelve in number and are composed in 866 lines of Persian poetry of the Masnavi type.

The *Dasam Granth*, like the *Adi*, is, of course, written in the Gurmukhi characters. In other respects, however, the book radically differs from the Adi Granth. Just as in religion, Guru Govind Singh set up a sort of new dispensation, so in his poetry also he struck a new line, so much so, that he discarded even the name of Nanak which all other successors of the first Guru had adopted in their composition.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

APPENDIX II

Is Sikhism a Mixture?

Before discussing the distinguishing features of Sikhism, it is necessary to explode the widely prevailing myth that Sikhism is a mixture of Hinduism and Muhammadanism. "The Sikhs are converts to a new religion, the seal of the double dispensation of Brahma and Mahomet." Thus wrote Cunningham more than sixty years ago and the story has since been too often repeated by many a writer on Sikhism. Even Monier Williams, who ought to have known better, could not resist the temptation of ascribing the theistical character of Sikhism to the influence of Islam. "Nanak", says the late Boden Professor, "was partially Islamised, to the extent at least of denouncing idolatry".

It may be at once conceded that Islam had something to do with the advent of Sikhism. In fact, there might have been no Sikhism or it would probably never appeared in this form if Islam had not crossed over the boundaries of India. But it does not mean that Sikhism is Islamic to any extent whatsoever. It was on the other hand this embodiment of Hindu reaction against Islam.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

It must be admitted that the impact of Islam stirred the Hindu community to its deepest foundations, and gave a powerful impetus to its thought and activity. But it was like rallying your forces when attacked by a powerful enemy, unlocking your magazines and arsenals to defend yourself from the onslaughts of the invader. The arms and ammunition are all yours and have always been there, it is the appearance of the enemy that makes you bring them out and use them to protect your homes and hearths The religious activity displayed by the Hindus in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries has an instructive parallel in the political struggles they made to save themselves from extinction. Driven from the plains they retired to the wastes and deserts of Rajputana and the hills of the North and South, keeping up the struggle until they vanquished their conquerors. Similarly in the religious struggle the outlying posts of Hinduism, *viz*, the beliefs and practices of the lower classes were carried by Islam in the first assault, annihilating their defenders almost to a man.[1] It was at once found that such beliefs were untenable before the iconoclastic creed of muslim fanatics. Two methods were adopted to save the Hindus from the impending destruction. The Brahmans fortified the social system and took

---

1. In the Punjab, particularly, the lower classes and even the peasantry, North of the Chenab, are almost wholly Muhammadan.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

shelter behind the walls of caste. Those who were left outside were destroyed. Those who were taken into the citadel were saved, with everything they held dear, whether gold or tinsel. The second method was to discard the vulnerable points, give up the rusty swords and battered armours of rotten beliefs and corrupted practices, and fight in the open field with flashing swords and thrice-tempered steel of the theistic doctrines of vigorous, manly, moral and philosophical Hinduism. This was the method adopted by Nanak and his followers.

It was in this way that Islam influenced Hinduism. Otherwise, as a well-known writer of Nanak's life says, the doctrines of Islam had as little to do with the formation of Nanak's doctrines as the forces of Babar with the creation of the Rajput Army that contested the sovereignty of India with him, under the leadership of Rana Sanga.[1] One necessitated the other, but did not form a part of it.

An examination of the so-called Moslem element in Sikhism would expose the hollowness of the view of the indebtedness of Sikhism to Islam. The most important feature of Sikhism ascribed to the influence of Islam is its monotheistic character and at first sight it might appear that Nanak borrowed his monotheism from the Koran. The following

---

1. Mulk Raj Bhalla—Nanak Charitra. (2nd ed., p. 234).

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

considerations, however, would show that such an inference would be entirely unwarranted:—

1. Nanak never had a Muhammadan teacher and knew very little of Persian and nothing of Arabic.[1]

2. His conception of God is entirely different from that given by Islam. The God of Islam is supposed to reside in the seventh heaven, at least that is supposed to be his favourite place where Muhammad in his *Meraj* or ascension is said to have met him. Nanak's God is omnipresent. The idea of any locality being the favourite residence of the deity is entirely absent from Nanak's teachings. Then again the Moslem God is anthropomorphic in character. Nanak's view of God is more pantheistic.

3. It would be absurd to suppose that it was Islam that taught the Hindus that God was one. The Hindus had realised the unity of God long before Muhammad, Christ, or even Moses was born.[2]

---

1. MS. or 187 (Brit. Mus.) says, Nanak learnt nothing but the letter *Alif*, the symbol of God's unity.

2. Though not quite necessary to prove what few sensible people would deny, the following texts from the Vedas might be referred to. Rig. Veda:-I, 164, 46; III, 20,3; VI, 41, 18; VIII, 8,1;X, 81, 2; X, 81,3; Yajur Veda :—22, 1; Atharva: XIII, 4, 4, 5; XIII, 4, 14, 21, etc.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

4. Nanak does not absolutely deny the existence of minor gods, and goddesses of Hindu mythology. He simply enjoins the worship of one Supreme God in place of the worship of minor gods.

5. He does not positively repudiate the incarnations though he does not regard them as equal to the Deity.[1]

6. That I am not alone in rejecting the theory of Sikhism borrowing from Islam is shown by the views of many European writers. Dr. Trumpp corroborates the statement made above that Nanak's idea of God is more pantheistic than monotheistic, and observes that "It is a mistake if Nanak is represented as having endeavoured to unite the Hindu and Muhammadan ideas about God. Nanak remained a thorough Hindu according to all his views." Malcolm says: "Though it (Sikhism) differs widely from the present worship of the Hindus, it has been thought to have considerable analogy to the pure and simple religion originally followed by that nation." Gordon in his neat little treatise on "The Sikhs," says "Sikhism has had its roots solely

---

1. See Barnett's "Hinduism", p. 38.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

> in religious aspirations. It was a revolt against the tyranny of Brahmanism. On throwing off the yoke, Nanak and his disciples reverted instinctively to the old theistic creed of their ancestors." (p. 20.)

Let us next turn to idol-worship which, according to Monier Williams, was rejected by Nanak under the influence of Islam. I do not deny that Islam might have had something to do with it, but certainly it was not Islam that taught Nanak or any other Hindu reformer, the baseness of idolatry. It is an admitted fact that idolatry was unknown to the ancient Hindus The Vedas never dreamt of it. Philosophical Hinduism had no place for it. The Jains thrust it upon Hindus and then it stuck to them. Still, however, great leaders of thought like Ramanuja placed it at the lowest rung of the devotional ladder, and suffered it to exist for the sake of the unenli ghtened.[1] Even Vaishnavism could "set its face against idolatry," and Kabir, a great Vaishnava leader, was a staunch iconoclast, and "there can be no doubt that the anti-idolatrous sect founded by Kabir grew out of Vaishnavism."[2] Nanak took

---

1. Few of the Hindus defend the idols except on the ground of these figures, before which they bend, being symbolical representations of the attributes of an all-powerful divinity. (Malcolm).

2. *Monier Williams.*—Prof. Wilson in his Oxford Lectures speaking about the ancient Hindus says "There seem to have been no images and no visible types of the objects of worship." Quoted by Elphinstone in his History. Vol. I, p. 73.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the cue from Kabir, or his own original and powerful mind inspired him, and he tried "to restore a nation who had degenerated from their original worship into idolatry, and may be considered more in the light of a reformer than a subverter of the Hindu religion."[1]

The next and the last prop of the Islamic-influence theory is the condemnation of caste by Nanak. In the first place it should be remembered that "there is no ground to contend that castes were altogether abolished by Nanak."[2] He was himself married according to the caste rules, his son was married according to the caste rules, and he never called upon any of his followers to give up the caste distinction in eating or drinking or in the more important matter of marriage. What he said against caste was that nobody should expect any favour at the hands of God for belonging to higher castes, that "God does not care for your caste but for your actions." This is a position which Hinduism has never denied. The haughtiest Brahman has never claimed that his lot in the life to come would be a whit better for his being a Brahman. All that he claims is that his present superior position is due to some good actions in the previous life or lives, and he can claim some privilege in this life in the social organization

---

1. Sir John Malcolm.
2. Malcolm.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

of his community. Nanak went only a little further and asserted that no caste, as such, was better or worse than another. And this is the position which the sacred books of the Hindus have held. Manu says, "A Brahman can fall to the position of a Sudra, while a Sudra can rise to that of a Brahman and so on,"[1] according to his *guna, karma,* and *subbava i.e.*, qualifications, calling and character respectively. The same criterion is laid down in the Apastambha Sutras, which lay down that by righteousness a person can rise to the higher and higher Varnas and by unrighteousness fall to the lower and lower Varna or caste.

Nor was Nanak the first Hindu to have declaimed against caste. Buddha was the first Hindu who, long before Christianity and more than a thousand years before the birth of Islam, had revived the real test of *varna* by levelling down the artificial fabric of caste system by preaching his gospel of equality, liberty and fraternity. The Puranas had followed Buddha in their disregard of caste distinctions. They were open to all, and the gospel of Bhakti was preached by them alike to the prince and the peasant, the Brahman

---

1. Manu, X, 65.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

and the *'handal.*[1] The democratical nature of the Bhakti School leads us to the consideration of another phenomenon, which so far as I am aware, has not been noticed by any European writer, I mean the antagonism of the Bhaktas or Sadhus to priest-craft. In Asia the ascetics have always been at war with the priests. The former stand upon purity of mind, charity, humility, devotion and love of God, while the latter stick to more or less mechanical religion, and cannot tolerate any violence of theological dogma or ritualistic observance of their faith.[2] The Muhamrnadans are said to have crucified Mansur and flayed Shams-i-Tabrez alive for deviating from the orthodox beliefs. He said in his verses addressing the Muslims *'na tarsa o yahudi am na gabro ne mussalmanam.'* Khusru lived under a broad-minded monarch[3] and could, therefore, boldly defy the Mullas and declare his contempt for

---

1. It even triumphed over caste, for an enthusiastic love of Rama or Krishna was theoretically a bond of union among human beings stronger than all social ties, and was incompatible with differences of rank or antagonisms of interest—*Monier Williams : Brahm and Hind*, pp. 63.4.

2. Even in Europe the Pope hurled his condemnation at Manichaeism and Gnosticism—Prof. Oman *Mystics*, etc. of India, (p. 8).

3. Ala-ud-Din Khilji (1296-1316) used to say that Government had nothing to do with religion which was simply on amusement of private life. Ferishta (quoted by F. W. Thomas, p. 87.)

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Mussalmani or Islam *Kafir-i-ishqam mussalmani mara darkar nest.*

Nanak was a Bhakta or Dervish and true to the traditions of his school could not be very particular in his allegiance to the caste rules of the priests.

Nor was Nanak the first even among the moderns to have raised his voice against the rigour of caste. Basva, a reformer of the southern Mahratta country who flourished about 1250 A D, had already attacked the problem. "Though a Brahman himself he denied the superiority of Brahmans, and tried his best to abolish the distinction of caste."[1] After him Ramanand, a Brahman, had taken, as his disciples, men from the highest to the lowest caste. Of his two most famous disciples, one, Kabir, was a weaver, the other, Ravi Das, a cobbler.

Kabir being a weaver himself could not have upheld the tyranny of caste, and his denunciation of it is as bitter and powerful as his caste was low. Nanak was a high caste Khatri, but having taken up the functions of a religious teacher, he could not defer to the superiority of Brahmans with any show of reasonableness even if he was not moved by more ethical and higher humanitarian and democratic motives. It is remarkable that

---

1. Dr. J. N. Bhattacharya. *Hindu castes and Sects*, p. 435.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

though professing to be opposed to caste system the Sikhs have not been able to shake it off in practical life. The Gurus themselves never discarded caste in practice. In recent years caste distinctions have received a strong and perpetuating impetus from certain agrarian laws enacted by the Punjab Government which, particularly the Punjab Alienation of Land Act, confer special advantages on members born in certain castes. Other Sikhs complain against these distinctions. At the time of *pahul* all Sikhs are told that henceforth their father will be Govind Singh, their mother Sahib Devan and their caste will be Sodhi. Why then, they urge, should they be debarred from the advantages which members of certain castes *viz*, Jats and others enjoy in respect of the acquisition and employment of certain forms of property. Non-jat Sikhs, as shown by their Press, bitterly resent this discrimination and Jat ascendancy which is daily gaining ground among the Sikhs.

It will appear from the foregoing remarks that Islam had very little to do with the reformed system of Nanak. "It will be seen," says Thomas "that Hinduism has borrowed but little directly from Islam. Wherever an attempt has been made to fuse the two religions, the essence of Muhammadanism has remained apart. Muhammad and Koran have contributed nothing of their spirit. The personality of the Prophet has never proved attractive. Thus the mission of the Prophet

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

must be admitted to have failed in India. A strictly Semitic and non-philosophical religion could have but little effect on a system which was rooted in Philosophy and rich in speculation of every kind."[1]

From what is said above it will be clear that although precipitated by Islam, Sikhism owes nothing to that religion. It is, on the other hand, a phase of Hindu religious revival and has in consequence, retained all essential features of real Hinduism. Still, however, there are certain points in which it stands out as distinct system from vulgar Hinduism and we shall now proceed to consider the more important of these points of distinction.

On the question of caste among the Sikhs the following extract from a Sikh Weekly (The Mauji of Lahore) will be found of interest :—

"The leaders of the Singh Sabha movement created an awakening among the Sikhs at a time when Sikhism was attacked on all four sides. If this movement had not been started the second biggest minority of the Punjab (The Sikhs) would have not been seen anywhere to day. It cannot be denied that the leaders of this movement were those who used to dance to the tune set by the Englishmen and whereas they drew the attenton of the Sikhs to the correct principles of

---

1. F. W. Thomas in Le Bas Prize Essay on "*Mutual Influence of Muhammadans and Hindus in India* (p. 97).

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Sikhism they converted the Sikhs into a community of first class toadies.

Before the non-co-operation movement started, the British Government used to look upon the Sikhs as its right hand and it was this right hand which had quelled the rebellion of 1857 and established British power permanently in this country.

If the leaders of this movement had been the flag-bearers of the freedom movement started by Guru Govind Singh instead of being worshippers of British officers, the History of the Punjab to-day would have been different. We would have been in a position not only to protect our own rights but also able to secure justice for others. The evil of looking up to the Rulers for everything was produced among us by the leaders of this movement. It was this evil which reduced us to the present disreputable position. In spite of the defect the Singh Sabha movement enabled the Sikhs to become a united community and the awakening which gave rise after 1920 to the Akali movement was the result of the Singh Sabha movement.

The Singh Sabha movement was at its height when the curse of Punjab Land Alienation Act was imposed as a result of which the Sikhs, who by their organization were capable of becoming a revolutionary force, were divided into Jats and non-Jats. The Sikhs did not realise the implications of this

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

law but when the results of this law began to manifest themselves the Sikhs realised the real object of this law. This is the law which re-introduced the spirit of caste among the Sikhs and the division of Sikhs into different groups instead of being united in one bond started.

It is useless to deny that the evil of caste system exists among the Sikhs to a regrettable degree and at this time there is a large number of such people among the Sikhs who like the *Varna Ashrami* Hindus take pride in their Hinduistic castes. These people have created separate groups in the name of separate caste brotherhoods and these groups taking advantage of caste prejudices are not only fouling the atmosphere but are widening the gulf in our ranks the bridging of which, if not impossible, is extremely difficult. People of this class are making money by grouping themselves in these caste organizations and while nobody would have cared a brass button for them, now, on account of these caste organizations, they have become great heroes so much so that some of the Gurdwaras have, also been named after these castes, and Sikh religion which, after waging war against Hindu castes, had laid the foundation of a united community is now divided into various groups. The Jat element of the Sikh population being in a majority and having been placed in a position of advantage under the Land Alienation Act considers itself superior to the non-Jats and in those parts of the Punjab where

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the Sikh Jats own large properties the non-Jat Sikhs are treated by them as the tenants and servants are treated in U.P. by big land holders there. These Sikh Jats look down with contempt on their non-Sikh brothers and call them Kamins which means a base or degraded person ; for example even if any blacksmith, carpenter, Kalal or goldsmith Sikh attains to high position he will be treated as a *Kamin* even by the humblest Jat if he or his ancestors live in the midst of Jat population.

It is this low mentality of the Sikh Jats which has forced the non-Jat Sikhs to leave the villages and shift to towns. If Sikh leaders fail to change this mentality of the Sikh Jats the non-Jat Sikhs will disappear from the villages.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

APPENDIX III

Distinguishing Features of Sikhism

The chief point in Nanak's doctrine, which distinguished it from vulgar Hinduism of his times, was the unity of the Supreme Being. The principal attributes of the Deity are set forth in the opening passage of the *Adi-Granth* which runs as follows:

"One *Omkar* whose name is truth, the creator, the spirit without fear, without enmity, having a timeless form, not produced from the womb. The True One existed in the beginning, even before the beginning of time. The True One is, and, O Nanak! the True One will also be."

The quotation will clearly show that Nanak's conception of God was the same as that given in the Hindu sacred books. The addition of the syllable Om stamps the whole passage as Hindu in form as well as meaning. It will be also admitted that the idea of the unity of God was not a strange one to the Hindus. Nevertheless it was Guru Nanak who proclaimed the Oneness of the Deity in the Punjab, after the idea, in its practical aspect, had been lost for centuries in this part of the country.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

In one respect Nanak surpassed Kabir and every other reformer produced by Hinduism. Since the Hindus borrowed the doctrine of divine incarnation from the Jains, no Hindu leader had shown the courage to question its correctness. Rama and Krishna had received the homage of everyone as Divine beings. It was Nanak who boldly questioned their divinity and brought them down to the level of mortals, and declared that the Almighty who created and controlled the whole universe could not add anything to His greatness by assuming human shape to destroy such wretches as Ravana and Kansa.[1] Guru Govind Singh went further, and stated :—

"He created millions of worms like Krishna, made many Ramas and destroyed them. Many Muhammads came into the world. All died when their time expired."[2]

It has been pointed out before that Guru Nanak's idea of God is Pantheistic and not quite theistic like that of Islam. "We can distinguish in the Granth," says Trumpp "a grosser and a finer kind of Pantheism. The grosser Pantheism identifies all things with the Absolute, the universe in its various forms being considered the expansion of it ; the finer Pantheism, on the other hand, distinguishes

---

1. *Rag Asa Mah.* 1.

2. *Vichitra Natak.*

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

between the absolute and the finite being and borders frequently on Theism. Though God is producing all things out of Himself and is filling all. yet He remains distinct from the creatures and is not contaminated by the Maya, as a lotus in a pond of water remains distinct from the water surrounding it."[1]

The next important point on which we find some difference between common Hinduism and Sikhism, as embodied in the teachings of the Gurus, is the absence of idol worship. It is true that in the Punjab the idols count among their worshippers almost all who call themselves Sikhs, still the spirit of Sikhism is opposed to the worship of images. There are in the *Adi* as well as the Dasam Granth hundreds of passages condemning the worship of images in the strongest terms. I have hinted elsewhere that the Gurus did not deny the existence of the various gods and goddesses of the Hindu Pantheon, but it can be positively stated that they never allowed the worship of these deities. The statement of Trumpp that Nanak never forbade the worship of other gods cannot consequently be maintained. The rejection of the worship of everything except God was the most important point, in fact, which gave Sikhism the character of a Reform or Revival. I wonder how Dr. Trumpp could make such a statement in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary. "Shall we,

---

1. Trumpp's *Adi Granth*, P. C.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

from what are considered lower classes) these restrictions have in fact become very loose. It should, however, be remembered that they still stick to the Hindu policy of exclusiveness towards non-Hindus and Sikhism except in theory is by no means a proselytizing religion.[1]

Nor are the Sikhs staunch adherents of the Vedic ceremonies. The sacred thread is not a necessity with them, this initiation ceremony being superseded by the *Pahul* which has been described else where. Lately there has been a great agitation among the Sikhs to have an independent marriage ceremonial. The result of this agitation was the Anand Marriage Bill introduced into the Supreme Council by the Maharaja (then Tikka Sahib) of Nabha which was passed into Law in 1909.[2]

---

1. Guru Govind Singh converted some sweepers but the orthodoxy was too strong even for him and the new converts have not yet become an integral part of the Hindu or Sikh community. However under stress of communal electorates untouchability quantum is being relaxed.

2. The Act is as follows :—

Whereas it is expedient to remove any doubts as to the validity of the marriage ceremony common among the Sikhs called Anand; it is hereby enacted as follows:—

Short-title and extent.

(1) This Act may be called the Anand Marriage Act, 1909; and

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

According to this system the Brahman is not a necessity and the Vedic texts are entirely dispensed with. Nor is the worship of Ganesha or the Planets allowed. The bride and the bridegroom are less shy of each other, ar d instead of going round the fire as in a

Validity of *Anand* Marriages.

(2) All marriages which may be or may have been duly solemnized according to the Sikh marriage ceremony called *Anand* shall be, and shall be deemed to have been, with effect from the date of solemnization of each respectively, good and valid in law.

Exemption of certain marriages from Act.

(3) Nothing in this Act shall applyto—

(*a*) Any marriage between persons not professing the Sikh religion, and

(*b*) Any marriage which has been judicially declared to be null and void.

Saving of marriages solemnized according to other ceremonies.

(4) Nothing in this Act shall affect the validity of any marriage duly solemnized according to any other marriage ceremony customary among the Sikhs.

Non-validation of marriages within prohibited degrees.

(5) Nothing in this Act shall be deemed to validate any marriage between persons who are related to each other in any degree of consanguinity or affinity which would, according to the customary law of the Sikhs, render a marriage between them illegal.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

among the Mussalmans, sacred thread among the Hindus and baptism among the Christians. Since the new dispensation of Guru Govind Singh no one can be a Sikh, properly so called, unless he keeps his hair and beard untouched by a razor or scissors not to speak of other observances of a minor importance. Now it is a common sight to see Sikhs quarrelling over the removal of long hair by a member of their community and Sikh preachers devoting more energy to the propagation of the long-hair creed than the real soul-uplifting teachings of the Gurus[1].

The fourth and the last special feature of Sikhism is the great emphasis laid in its teaching on *Nam.* This means the constant repetition of any of the names of God, and curious as it may seem, considering that Sikhism does not recognise divine incarnation, the favourite name of God in the Granth is Rama. This doctrine of *Nam* was originally borrowed from Vaishnavism but in Sikhism it has been given the foremost position so as to supersede as a mode of salvation, the performance of *Yajnas*, the giving of alms and even the acquisition of *Jnana*

1. I fully sympathise with the Sikhs in their efforts to keep up what may be called the insignia of Sikhism, for, otherwise, they would be in danger of losing their individuality as a great community. Nevertheless it is true that as religious system Sikhism has lost a great deal by being burdened over with symbols and ceremonies like other religions.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

These are about all the points which distinguish Sikhism from other Hindu sects. In social polity too there are so few points of difference between Sikhism and Hinduism that it is not always easy for a stranger to tell the one from the other. Still, however, it may be pointed out that in general appearance the Sikh is very different from an ordinary Hindu. Generally tall and stately, with long hair and a carefully-kept long beard, he can be easily recognised even in a crowd of Hindus. He never goes out without a turban, a cap or hat being strictly forbidden to him. In eating and drinking he follows the Hindus except in so far that he is generally a meat-eater and not so strict in *Chauka* system He generally abstains from smoking, it being most strin-gently interdicted by Guru Govind Singh. Though there are few vegetarians among the Sikhs they will not eat flesh if the animal has not been killed with one stroke of the sword, or, in the case of the fowl, by one *Jhatka* or jerk wringing off the neck. The cow is as sacred to the Sikh as to the Hindus, but he has no scruples about the pig of which, in fact, he is particularly fond, perhaps as a relic of his ancient hatred of the Muslim

There is not much difference in the social polity of the Sikhs and the Hindus. But the Sikhs are not so strict in the observance of caste restrictions in eating and drinking and in matrimonial affairs. Among the lower classes, (and the majority of Sikhs are recruited

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

O. brother," says Nanak, "worship gods and goddesses? What can I ask of them and what can they give?"[1]. Again we find him saying "Do not fall into doubt, worship none but God, no tombs or shrines,"[2] and so on.

It is curious, however, that inspite of these injunctions not only is the worship of images common enough among the Sikhs,[3] but a strange form of worship which Guru Nanak could not foresee, has grown up among them, I mean the worship of the Granth. There is no doubt that the enlightened section of the community bow before their sacred book merely as a sign of respect, but among the masses the Granth is worshipped almost exactly in the same way as the best of idols was ever worshipped by the most idolatrous of Hindus. At the Golden Temple of Amritsar and at every other Sikh place of pilgrimage and even in ordinary Dharmsalas or Sikh temples, the same routine of worship is gone through as in

---

1. Sorath Mah 1.

2. *Ibid*

3. Till recently the open spaces round the tank of the Golden Temple were occupied by Brahmans with the sacred images installed all over which were worshipped by most of the pilgrims visiting the temple. In the compound of the tomb of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, there was a small temple of Durga in which was installed a beautiful life-size marble image of Durga. All these images were swept away in a powerful wave of Sikh reform about the year 1922.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

the temples of Mathura and Brindaban in connection with the Hindu idols. The same incense and candle burning, the same kind of *arati*, the same blowing of conches and so on, is gone through in Sikh Dharmsalas as in the Hindu temples. Still, however, it must be admitted that the Sikhs do not deify that book as the Hindus deify their idols, and Granth worship is not in all details the same as idol worship and already a reaction has set in against this idolatrous worship of the Granth.

The third characteristic of Sikhism, as founded by Nanak and before its modification by Govind Singh, is the utter disregard for form. Nanak's most powerful attacks are directed against those who attach more importance to the external paraphernalia of religion and do not enter into the spirit of the creed they follow. Nanak respected every religion so far as the real essence of it was concerned but regarded each one of them with contempt where its votaries stopped short at the mechanical part of it. The Sandhya of the Hindus, the Nimaz of the Mussalmans, the scruples of the Jains, none found favour with him, if they were not accompanied by a pure mind, a charitable disposition, a kind heart and genuine love for God. This beauty of Sikhism as a religious system was lost when the tenth Guru felt himself forced by circumstances to turn Sikhism into a political weapon. Under him certain observances came to occupy the same place in Sikhism as circumcision

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Vedic marriage the parties go round the Adi Granth which is always on the spot. Some texts from the Adi Granth are read, and though they were originally meant to describe in a figurative way the union of the human soul with the Supreme Being, they are made to serve the purpose of sanctifying the union of the bride and the bridegroom. The ceremony was originally resorted to only by the lower classes to celebrate widow marriages and such irregular connections but ever since the separatist tendency has manifested itself among the Sikhs the ceremony is coming into the vogue even among the higher classes.

The festivals of the Sikhs are almost the same as those obsesved by the Hindus. The Sikhs have, however, added to the Hindu festival of Holi, an additional holiday called the *Holla Mahalla* which follows the last day of the Holi carnival. The birthdays and death anniversaries of their Gurus are also observed as holidays by the Sikhs.

The chief peculiarity of the Sikh, however, lies in his soldierly habits and qualifications. Originally no better than the common peasantry of the Punjab the Sikhs were turned by the tenth Guru into a nation of warriors and heroes who would dare the lion in his

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

own den and challenge the dreaded Aurangzeb in his own Court.[1]

"A living spirit" wrote Cunningham, over a century ago possesses the whole Sikh people and the impress of Govind has not only elevated and altered the constitution of their minds, but has operated materially and given amplitude to their physical frames. The

---

1. Daya Singh went with the Guru's letter to the Court of Aurangzeb. He neither bent his head nor uttered any word of salutation. He simply shouted *Wahguru ji ka Khalsa, Sri Wahguru ji ki Fateh* and handed the letter to the Emperor.

About 1740, one Massa Ranghar, Moghul officer in Amritsar, turned the sacred temple of Har Mandir into his pleasure hall and used to hold dancing parties within its precincts. The grounds were further desecrated by smoking and spitting on the sacred floor. The news of this dishonour to their holiest place was carried by a Sikh to Mahtab Singh (a Jat of Mirankot) and Sukha Singh (a carpenter of Mari Kambo) two of the Sikhs who were then in hiding in Bikanir. "How could you see the temple desecrated and still live," said they to the bringer of the news, and girding up their swords started at once to Amritsar. Disguising themselves as Muhammadans they filled two bags with pebbles, rounded to represent coins and entered into the presence of Massa under the pretence of paying their revenues. While one held him in conversation the other took out his sword and cut off the tyrant's head. Before the courtiers could recover from their surprise, the heroes rode away through the town and out of their reach. So literally was the confidence of Govind justified, who often used to say that his sparrows would bring down hawks, and a single Sikh defy *Sawa Lakh*.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

features and external form of a whole people have been modified, and a Sikh chief is not more distinguishable by his stately person and free and manly bearing than a minister of his faith is by a lofty thoughtfulness of look which marks the fervour of his soul, and his persuasion of the near presence of the Divinity." The physical superiority and the great military qualities of the Sikhs were amply shown during the Anglo-Sikh wars of the middle part of the last century. "Never did a native army having so relatively slight an advantage in numbers fight a battle with the British in which the issue was so doubtful as at Firoz Shah; and if the victory was decisive, opinion remains divided as to what the result might have been if the Sikh troops had found commanders with sufficient capacity to give their qualities full opportunity."[1]

"None have fought more stoutly and stubbornly against us, none more loyally and gallantly for us, than the Sikhs."[2]

Even at the present time the Sikhs are admittedly the best fighting race in India. The flower of the British Indian Army are supplied by the Sikhs. "Wherever" says

---

1. Sir G. Cough and Arthur Innes. *The Sikhs and Sikh Wars.* (p. 42.)

2. General Sir John J. H. Gordon K. C. B. *The Sikhs* (p. 3).

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

General Gordon, "there has been hard fighting to be done, there they have been found in the forefront, maintaining their high reputation for steadfast fidelity, dogged tenacity and dauntless courage,—the undying heritage of the Sikhs."

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

More Books on Sikh History and Religion.

Name of the Book	*Author*	Rs.	As.
Guru Nanak	Raja Sir Daljit Singh	7	8
Sikhism	Prof. Teja Singh	2	4
Essays in Sikhism	Prof. Teja Singh	3	0
Psalm of Peace	Prof. Teja Singh	2	8
Philosophy of Sikhism	Dr. Sher Singh	10	0
Banda Singh Bahadur	Prof. Ganda Singh	2	8
Ten Masters	Prof. Puran Singh	4	0
Jap Ji	Prof. Puran Singh	0	8
Spirit Born People	Prof. Puran Singh	3	0
Message of Sikhism	Harbans Singh	2	8
Sikh Religion (3 vols)	Macauliffe	50	0
Evolution of the Khalsa	Bannerji	4	0
Rise of the Sikhs	Sinha	4	0
Maharaja Ranjit Singh	Centenary volume	1	8
Sikh Martyrs	Bh. Lachhman Singh	3	8
Jang Nama	Qazi Nur Mohd	2	0
The Miracle of Sikhism	Sir Jogindra Singh	0	8
Sikh Ceremonies	Sir Jogindra Singh	2	8
Battles of Govind Singh	Sundar Singh	0	8
Message of Guru Arjan	Prof. Puran Singh	0	8
Birth of the Khalsa	(U. S. A.)	1	0
Peace Eternal	Dr. Sher Singh	2	8
Bliss Eternal	Dr. Sher Singh	1	0
Growth of Responsibility in Sikhism	Prof. Teja Singh	1	8

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

ERRATA

Page	*Line*	*Instead of*	*Read*
37	14	Had s	Hadis
44	13	atmoshpere	atmosphere
48	7	to his own	his own
49	9	Nakak	Nanak
49	10	teaching	teachings
52	8	infuence	influence
52	12	unworldiness	unworldliness
53	8	exiitence	existence
53	14	become	became
54	26	becuase	because
55	20	inhabitated	inhabited
55	28	Parhask	Prakash
56	11	stregthening	strengthening
64	12	ru ned	ruined
64	31	hereditory	hereditary
69	3	ministrels	minstrels
71	26	Gazetter	Gazetteer
78	15	Scepter	Sceptre
85	12	w th	with
85	18	ther	their
87	12	princer	pincer
89	14	bitterst	bitterest
90	2	maelstorm	maelstrom
95	21	brought out	brought
96	17	legistative	legislative
97	16	493 P.G.	493 P.C.
98	5	persecution	persecutions
99	1	*puri*.	*Puri*

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Page	*Line*	*Instead of*	*Read*
100	28	embrance	embrace
100	32	parin	pairin
103	22	wood	wool
106	27	tahchi	topchi
106	27	and	an
109	5	possesion	possession
109	31	Bedhi	Bidhi
112	4	hill	hills
112	15	p ety	piety
117	2	Hythel	Kythel
119	9	Tegh Bahadur	Deg Bahadur
119	32	excells	excels
120	20	Sikh	Sikhs
125	17	Governmentin	Government
127	31	has	had
128	3	Augrangzeb	Aurangzeb
130	24	down-tradden	down-trodden
130	29	austereties	austerities
131	3	Chr st	Christ
134	10	little	tittle
138	19	Succcss	Success
138	30	Cunninghan	Cunningham
142	10	*toqa*	*toga*
146	9	pick out with	pick out
148	34	ncreate	increate
149	19	part	parts
152	2	Compaign	Campaign
153	27	presented	preserved
158	14	Khawaja	Khwaja
162	13	disposing off	disposing of
164	5	improvished	improvised
166	26	Chunkar	Chukar

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Page	*Line*	*Instead of*	*Read*
172	11	hearing great	hearing a great
173	8	youself	yourself
184	30	appered	appeared
189	22	Jahandad	Jahandar
192	13	behined	behind
193	4	But is	But it
195	27	ruler	rulers.
207	17	mugim	muqim
214	26	historions	historians
221	4	Compaign	Campaign
223	33	Cunniinghan	Cunningham
224	10	Mannu[1].	Mannu
224	10	he	the
224	27	*ahasin*	*ghasin*
225	25	wifh	with
226	18	prom sed	promised
228	1	occuation	occupation
232	1	instrumenta	instrumental
234	16	treahery	treachery
239	24	Ram Gurhia	Ram Garhia
248	22	artlcles	articles
248	24	appraised	apprised
256	16	roops	troops
257	19	invaders	invaders were
260	1	Singh	Jassa Singh
264	22	Dul	Dal
265	26	Band-chhor	Bandi-chhor
266	27	t e ty	treaty
272	28	wnom	whom
272	28	tne	the
274	26	appraised	apprised
276	7	mmense	immense

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Page	*Line*	*Instead of*	*Read*
278	27	from his	from its
282	22	prestine	pristine
284	32	hereditory	hereditary
286	16	Punjab	Payal
287	30	resouces	resources
294	19	English	Irish
296	29	Mcmoirs	Memoirs
302	20	Employed	employed
304	1	shall he	shall be
309	10	*patil*	*patti*
311	16	I have	I had
311	24	Aunt	aunt
318	34	mis	misr.
332	16	mode o	mode of
332	17	pe sonal	personal
332	17	po sessed	possessed
333	5	in of	ing of
333	6	frogm	from
334	13	Andemans	Andamans
334	19	boy come	boy came
343	10	missicnary	missionary
344	2	Aralis	Akalis
349	4	Board of	Board or
357	1	Pefore	Before
362	26	penegyrics	panegyrics
364	10	miscellaneons	miscellaneous
368	24	this	the

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

BOOKS

Published by

NEW BOOK SOCIETY

AUTHORS & PUBLISHERS,

Post Box No. 47,

LAHORE.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

A BRILLIANT BOOK FOR ALL BOOK LOVERS!

THOUGHTS OF SHAKESPEARE

Being a Treasury of 3,300 Gems
Classified under 240 Subjects

by

N. B. SEN.

Lately Editor, The Literary Star, Lahore.

REVIEWS

It is the best selection of Shakespeare that I have seen. —*Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru.*

A useful and well-arranged publicati n.
—*H. E. Sir Henry Craik.*

A very useful and well-arranged compilation.
—*Sir Sikander Hyat Khan.*

His choice shows a highly cultured taste.
—*Sir G. C. Narang.*

You will find fascinating quotations in it.
—*Sir Abdul Qadir.*

It will be useful as a Reference book.
—*Sir Radha Krishnan.*

A valuable addition to the library of the Viswa-Bharti.
—*Sir Rabindra Nath Tagore.*

I find it an admirable production.—*Sir Douglas Young.*

I admire the labour spent. —*Sir Tek Chand.*

It is the only book of its kind. —*Sir N. N. Sirkar.*

It is an admirable production.—*Sir M. N. Mukerjee.*

Mr. Sen has laboured prodigiously. —*Sir P. C. Ray.*

Pages 400. (*2nd Revised Edition*) **Price Rs. 6/4/-**

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"The author has rendered invaluable service to the literary world by writing this useful book, which is the result of years of study. labour and concentration."

Tribune, Lahore.

"The arrangement of subjects is excellent, and the selection superb. The volume which speaks well for Mr. Sen's scholarship and industry fills a long-felt gap."

New Book Digest, Bombay.

"Though not an original work, it involves a cultural back-ground of high order. The nature of the selections indicates the Poet in him."

Indian Literary Review, Bombay.

"Mr. Sen combines erudition with a sensitive perception of the intuitive depths of knowledge. He is a close, careful and interested student of Shakespeare."

Amrita Bazar Patrika, Calcutta.

The book will be of great help to writers and speakers who want to embellish or add force to their writings and speeches."

Modern Review. Calcutta.

"There are innumerable anthologies and selections of Shakespeare but perhaps this is the only one of its kind published in India."

Orient Weekly, Calcutta.

"The author's treatment of the subject proves his learning, thoughtfulness and fine literary taste. We admire this book and hope it will be much appreciated by the scholars."

Anand Bazar Patrika, Calcutta.

"It is difficult to say whether one has ever had anything of this sort from any Indian reader and Mr. Sen deserves the honour due to a pioneer."

The Whip, Calcutta.

"The average man will find in this volume a store-house of of dainty delicacies, neatly docketed and arranged."

Hindustan Standard, Calcutta.

"You open this book and you will find yourself in a Garden of Literary Delight."

Romance, Calcutta.

"Mr. Sen shows taste and judgement in his selections. The design and execution of the work leave nothing to be desired."

Indian Review, Madras.

"Mr. Sen is endowed with, as Carlyle says, a "seeing eye." The work constitutes an anthology of rare excellence. It testifies to the profound scholarship and ardour of the Editor."

Hindu, Madras.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

EVERY HINDU MUST READ

PUNJAB'S EMINENT

HINDUS

CONTAINS TWENTY BIOGRAPHICAL & CHARACTER SKETCHES OF GREAT HINDU LEADERS OF THE PUNJAB, INCLUDING

1. The Late Lala Lajpat Rai.
2. The Late Lala Hardyal, M.A.
3. The Late Swami Ram Tirath.
4. The Late Swami Shradhanand.
5. The Late Mahatma Hans Raj.
6. The Late Sir Ganga Ram.
7. The Late Lala Harkishan Lal.
8. The Late Raja Narendra Nath.
9. The Late Sir Shadi Lal.
10. The Late Sir Chhotu Ram.
11. Dr. Sir Gokul Chand Narang.
12. Bakshi Sir Tek Chand.
13. Dr. Sir Manohar Lal.
14. Bhai Parma Nand, M.L.A.
15. Goswami Ganesh Dutt, etc.

Editor : **N. B. SEN**

Author of "Thoughts of Shakespeare," etc.

FOREWORD BY

The Right Hon'ble Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru,

P.C., K.C.S.I., LL.D., D.LITT., D.C.L.

Pages 333. *(with 20 Illustrations)* *Price Rs. 7/8*

(2nd Edition : (Revised & Enlarged) Cloth Bound)

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

PRESS OPINIONS

(1) "This exceedingly readable volume is bound to be a source of unending inspiration to the Hindus of present and future generations."

—["*Modern Riview*," *Calcutta*.]

(2) "The character and personality of some of the twenty eminent Hindus of the Punjab which are portrayed in this work are worthy of our most careful study. A large number of them have been written with a laudable aim and sincerity..'

—["*Tribune*,'. *Lahore*.]

(3) "Mostly written by well-known writers of the Province and edited with an eye to uniformity of treatment, the accounts are very revealing and readable and provide a wealth of interesting detail. An eminently useful book, good alike for general reading and ready reference."

—["*Hindu*," *Madras*.]

(4) "With the authors including some men who may themselves be termed eminent, the book is readable throughout ; in some cases, the writers are obviously well-informed and supply details not generally known."

—["*Illustrated Weekly of India*," *Bombay*.]

(5) The book, which is the result of the combined efforts of various competent writers of this Province, will help the reader to understand the Modern Pudjab at its best."

—["*Daily Herald*" *Lahore*.]

(6) We hope all educated Punjabees interested in the welfare of their province will make it a point to study this useful work and enrich their knowledge about the life, work and achievements of some of the Makers of the Modern Punjab."

—["*The Modern Librarian, Lahore*.]

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

(To be out shortly)

PUNJAB'S EMINENT MUSLIMS

Containing Biographical and Character Sketches
of the following Personalities.

Editor: **N. B. SEN**

---

1. Abdul Qadir, Sir
2. Abdul Rahman, Sir
3. Bashir-ud-Din, Mirza
4. Fazal-i-Hussain, The late Sir
5. Feroz Khan Noon, Sir
6. Haye, Mian Abdul
7. Iftikhar-ud-Din, Mian
8. Iqbal, The late Sir Mohd.
9. Jamal Din, Sir Mohd.
10. Khizar Hayat Khan, Malik
11. Kitchlu, Dr. Saif-ud-Din
12. Liaqat Hayat Khan, Sir
13. Mashraqi, Allama
14. Maqbool Mahmud, Mir
15. Mohammad Ali, Moulana
16. Muzaffar Khan, Nawab
17. Shafi, The late Sir Mohd.
18. Shah Din, The late Mian
19. Shah Nawaz, The late Sir
20. Sikandar Hayat Khan, The late Sir
21. Shahab-ud-Din, Sir
22. Umar Hayat Khan, Sir
23. Zafar Ali Khan, Moulana
24. Zafrulla Khan, Sir Mohd.
25. Zulfiqar Ali Khan, The late Sir

(This list is subject to additions and alterations)

NEW BOOK SOCIETY

Publishets, Post Box 47, Lahore.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

(To be out shortly)

PUNJAB'S EMINENT SIKHS

Containing Biographical and Character Sketches
of the following Personalities.

Editor : **N. B. SEN**

---

1. Amar Singh, Sardar
2. Baldev Singh, Sardar
3. Boota Singh, Sir
4. Diljit Singh, Raja Sir
5. Dasaundha Singh, Sardar
6. Datar Singh, Sir
7. Dayal Singh Majithia, The late Sardar
8. Jawahar Singh, Sir
9. Jodh Singh, Principal
10. Jogindra Singh, Sir
11. Kharak Singh, Baba
12. Mohan Singh, S. B. Sardar
13. Mehtab Singh, The late S. B. Sardar
14. Nihal Singh, Saint
15. Sant Singh, Sardar
16. Sampuran Singh, Sardar
17. Santokh Singh, Sardar
18. Sardul Singh Caveeshar, Sardar
19. Sobha Singh, Sir
20. Sunder Singh Dhupia, S. B. Sardar
21. Sunder Singh Majithia, The late Sir
22. Tara Singh, Master
23. Teja Singh, Mr. Justice
24. Ujjal Singh, S. B. Sardar
25. Vir Singh, Bhai

(This list is subject to additions and alterations)

NEW BOOK SOCIETY

Publishers, Post Box 47, Lahore.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

(To be out Shortly)

PUNJAB'S EMINENT

WOMEN

Editor: **N. B. SEN**

Containing Biographical Sketches of the well-known Women who have distinguished themselves by Social, Political, Religious or Educational work in the Punjab.

ANOTHER NOTABLE WORK
BY N. B. SEN

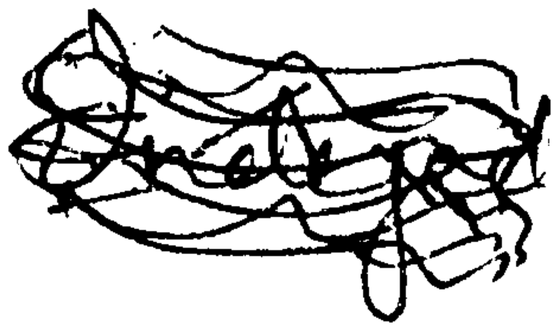
THOUGHTS OF BACON

The Editor of "Thoughts of Shakespeare" is busy since long in making another exhaustive collection of the imperishable thoughts of this great Philosopher, Thinker and Writer of the 16th Century whose acuteness of observation, profundity of views and directness of style have been admired and respected throughout the world.

The book will be Classified and Illustrated. Pre-publication Price Rs. 6/4 only. Please book your orders atonce with the Publishers.

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org



Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

B-1418

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org

Digitized by Panjab Digital Library | www.panjabdigilib.org